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BOSTON
OLD STATE HOUSE

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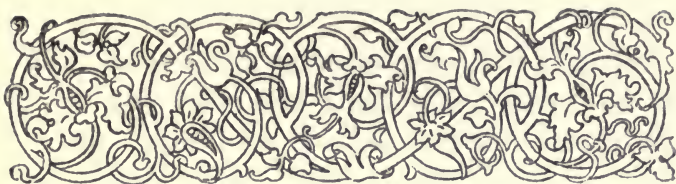
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A VERY OLD CORNER OF BOSTON

BY

JAMES FROTHINGHAM HUNNEWELL.



A VERY OLD CORNER OF BOSTON

A PAPER READ TO THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER, OLD
STATE HOUSE, FEBRUARY 14, 1888, BY

JAMES FROTHINGHAM HUNNEWELL.



THE head of State Street, as is well known, is associated with very early things, and of nearly all kinds, in Boston. Besides the Old State House, long a centre of civil affairs, there are, close by, the sites of the first meeting-house of the First Church and of its successors through many years. At a little distance is the spot where Gov. Winthrop lived ; not far off were the wharves for the pioneer commerce, the jail for those who ignored the good examples of our fathers, and the burial-ground, everybody's last refuge. Scarcely a thing connected with the history and daily life of the early Bostonians was wanting in the group of objects.

Yet old and comprehensive as the group is, annexation has added to the city a little tract on which all this variety of objects, some of even earlier date, existed, and which was later the scene of warfare on a far larger scale than was shown in the Boston Massacre.

To our day some good people are apt to think it a bit of adventure to reach the place, but it is more of an undertaking to find what the place was some two hundred and fifty years ago. Instead of using street-cars or carriages, we can accordingly suppose ourselves in the body, and in search of knowledge, at that remote date. We will put on our tall, thick boots, our dark, round capes and broad-brimmed hats, and then walk along a lane to the shore where we now find Dock Square. Turning to the left, as the flats make the road bend, about on the site of Union Street, then going over a bit of firm land, or a causeway somewhere at Haymarket Square, we will continue northward by what is like a bit of crooked road in the country. To the right are fields or pastures; to the left, a marsh. At the end of this road we will reach the bank of Charles River, and there find the early ancestor of our Secretary, ready to prove that an original family trait was skill in pulling things successfully through. John Burrage will, in a boat, take travellers across the water to the northerly shore.

There we look around and see a small village, and probably make up our minds that it is as simple as

it is small. So far as a new country and limited means allow, it has an English look, and very naturally, for its few inhabitants have but recently come from the old island. A short road leads from the ferry to a rudely outlined and built Market-place after the English pattern. Around it may be counted fifteen dwellings, a couple of store-houses, and a little brewery. The land is rather flat, but just beyond the Market-place rises a low, small hill, and farther off, more to the eastward, there is a larger one. Beyond clearings for pasturage or crops grow oak trees.

This much, or little, in 1638, is where Christian civilization was, on any large scale, first established along the shores of Boston Harbor. Here, in 1628 or '29, Ralph, Richard and William Sprague with a few others, settled by the "free consent" of John Sagamore, the Aberginian chief of the place. Here, in June, 1629, Thomas Graves with about one hundred persons in the employ of the Massachusetts Company that had undertaken to colonize this region, began to build a town and make it ready for the great body of settlers. Here, in July, 1630, were gathered a larger number of English than had probably ever before been together on the shores of the Bay that has supplied a name for the State. Here, under the Charlestown Oak, was the earliest public worship by the greatest congregation yet in the region. Here, July 8th, was the chief observance of a "Publick Day of Thanksgiving," held through all the

plantations, for the safe arrival of the Colonists, the first of those Days since so well known that could be called general. Here also, July 30th, was signed a Covenant from which dates the First Church of Boston, and here, furthermore, was the first seat of civil government on the central parts of the Bay.

To provide for these people — there were many hundreds of them — houses or huts (probably the last word best describes them), had been built, and, directly *in* the Market-place, a better structure called the “Great House” was made ready for the Governor and chief officers. Such were the restricted means of the Colonists that this “House” had to serve for various uses. Not only did the magistrates live in it awhile, but also in it for some time were held the public worship of the town and the earliest sessions of the Court of Assistants. It was residence, meeting-house and the first State House combined. According to the records, the first Court was held August 23, 1630, and thus early legislative business was begun, not only according to the ideas of the time, but also with a sort of presage of some things that we think are modern. Mr. Wilson, the minister, was voted £20 salary “till his wife come ouer”; it was ordered “that Morton, of Mount Woolison, should presently be sent for by processe”; (?) that building mechanics should “not take above 2^s aday”; and finally that an estimate be made of the Governor’s expenses “in entertaineing sefall publique psons since his landing

in Newe England." At the session September 7th, it was ordered "that Thomas Morton, of Mount Wolliston, shall presently be sett into the bilbowes, & after sent prisoner into England," his goods seized to defray cost of transportation and satisfy Indians from whom he had unjustly taken a canoe; and finally "that his howse . . . shalbe burnt downe to the ground in the sight of the Indians, for their satisfaccon, for many wrongs hee hath done them from tyme to tyme." Other business was acted on; and it was ordered, in four words, probably without even dreaming that the centre of the universe was definitely located by name, that "Trimountaine shalbe called Boston."

On that more fashionable territory, the Court, after a few more meetings in the "Great House," held its first session, October 19th. An evidently imperfect exploration of the peninsula north of the Charles had not resulted in finding good water, and as there had been a great deal of sickness, the crowded huts had probably become infected. The majority of the population moved to Boston; the part that remained although small was good, and established itself around the Market-place for a short distance on either hand along the shore, and, in a more scattered way, up the country road, now Main Street.

In less than two minutes one can read who these residents were, and just about where they lived; but it takes many an hour of study to find out the particulars

from the Book of Possessions, made in 1638.* The accounts in this Book, while examples of the vagueness and lack of order apt to be found in some of our early documents, are precious as only, or chief, sources of information on the subject. We can hardly understand why they are made with such disregard of system, but we can readily comprehend why the rudely marked and then unimportant particulars were what we find them. They describe a straggling little village where land was of small value. Guided by them, and looking around the Market-place, we find, from the left of the landing, that Prudence Wilkinson, Samuel Carter, Thomas Graves, Robert Miriam, and F. Wines had, each, a house and garden. Next beyond, and between Crooked Lane, as it was well named, and the river, were Francis Willoughby, who had wharves by the ferry and a ship-yard west of it, Thomas Brigden, and then Edward Johnson, who wrote the "Wonder Working Providence of Zion's Saviour," and Robert Hayle, ancestor of the well known and very bright family of Hales.

Back, or north, of the "Great House" lived the Rev. Thomas Allen, another author whose works remain; and next to him one whose name is known through the world, the Rev. John Harvard. His next neighbor was Increase Nowell, who had a house on the left, and a

* See the writer's "Century of Town Life" for a plan and description.

large garden on the right of the road to the country, now Main Street. On it, and beyond this place and out of sight from it, there were a dozen or fifteen more houses. To the right of the Market-place were, successively, the widow of Thomas Ewer, Francis Norton, Wm. Brackenbury, Joseph Hills, Capt. Robert Sedgwick, and Edward Converse, each of them having a house and garden. Eastward, and chiefly near the water, were some fifteen other houses, one of them, on "the highway towards mistick river," belonging to George Bunker. Near the present Hoosac Elevator there was a small fort, and on the hill back of the "Great House" were a few more dwellings. Including two stores, two breweries, and a barn, there were about sixty-nine buildings on the peninsula.

The chief settlement was, as might be expected, around the Market-place. Small as was the group, and poor as were the houses, there, nevertheless, lived almost contemporaneously, soon after the exodus to Boston, one of our earliest historians, Ed. Johnson;* another author, the Rev. Thos. Allen,† whose works were published with commendation in London; a minister, the Rev.

* *Capt. Edward Johnson* was born in 1599, and lived near Canterbury, in Kent, England. He seems to have been a farmer, with something more than a knack at trading and carpentry, who came over in 1636, and lived perhaps ten years in Charlestown. He not only wrote one of our most valuable and curious early histories, but also poetry.

† *Rev. Thos. Allen*, who was born at Norwich in 1608, was minister here from 1639 to 1651, and subsequently returned to England.

John Harvard,* who gave his name to one of the chief colleges on this continent; a layman, Increase Nowell,† who was a pillar of the Colonial Church; one of the earliest captains of the "Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company," Robert Sedgwick;‡ another captain,

* *Rev. John Harvard*, minister here 1637-38, was born or lived in Southwark, London. Capt. Johnson wrote these verses on him:

"If Harverd had with riches here been taken,
He need not then through troublous Seas have paft,
But Chrifs bright glory hath thine eyes fo waken,
Nought can content, thy foule of him muft taft:
Oh taft and tell how fweet his Saints among,
Chrift ravifht hath thy heart with heavenly joyes
To preach and pray with teares affection ftrong,
From hearts delight in him who thee imployes."

In 1828, a granite obelisk in memory of John Harvard was erected in the Old Burial Ground in Charlestown. The inscriptions on it became badly impaired, and the writer tried to have them restored. Later ten gentlemen (of whom he was one) replaced them with substantial bronze tablets.

† *Increase Nowell*, first signer of the Ch. Covenant, 1632, and Ruling Elder, came perhaps from London, and was perhaps the most prominent early layman. Capt. Johnson favored him also with verses:

"Increafe fhalt thou, with honour now, in this thy undertaking,
Thou haft remain'd, as yet unfaind, all errors foule forfaking;
To poore and rich, thy Juftice much hath manifested bin:
Like Samuel, Nathanaell, Chrift hath thee fram'd within;
Thy faithfulneffe, people exprefse, and Secretary they
Chofe thee each year, by which appeare, their love with thee doth ftay."

His sons, Samuel and Rev. Alexander, were graduates of Harvard College, and both were probably born in Charlestown.

‡ *Capt. Robert Sedgwick* is said to have come from the northern part of England, but lived in London before he came here in 1636. He was a trader, captain of the first "trained band" in this town, a major-general of the militia, and three years a captain of the Ancient and

Thos. Graves,* who became a Cromwellian Admiral ; three or four first-rate merchants, and the family whose name designates one of the most important battles in the War for American Independence. The list is not finished, but enough of it is given to show that the little Charlestown group was quite worthy to be gathered around the "Great House" that was practically the first State House in what we now call Boston.†

Honorable Artillery Company. In operations, 1654, against the French in Nova Scotia, he had an important and successful part. As a business man he was prominent ; indeed he was one of the most notable among all the inhabitants of Charlestown.

* *Thomas Graves*, born in Ratcliff, England, 1605, was master of several merchant ships, including the "Trial," the first ship built in Boston. During one of his voyages he caught a Dutch privateer in the English Channel, and in reward was, by Cromwell, made commander of a war vessel, and hence attained the title of "Rear Admiral."

† The writer, in his "Century of Town Life," published March 28, 1888, gave a plan of City Square about as it was before June 17, 1775, and showing the position of the Great House as nearly as remaining data, all imperfect, then allowed.

In the beginning of the following May, large excavations for water mains were extended across the Square from Warren Avenue to Warren Street, close to the line of the surface railroad tracks. About ten feet south of a new hydrant hole built at that time was found an old well, the top of which was arched over with stone four or five feet below the present surface. On a line from the south corner of City Hall (corner of Harvard Street), in about that direction, was a stone foundation wall extending downward as far as the digging, six or seven feet below the present surface. Nearly at a right angle and running towards Warren Street was another wall, and back from it towards the City Hall (said the overseer) was something like a division wall. There was also, as then stated, at the S. E. an area paved with rounded stones. Red bricks and tiles, and charred wood were also found. All these objects could have been no other than relics of the Great House. When the town was rebuilt the area now the Square was cleared, and the surface, it is said, raised about three feet, shown also by the excavation described.

Of this, the earliest historic building within the present city limits, we can now know little more than how it fared as a piece of real estate, and where it stood. It long ago perished, as will later be narrated, and not a vestige was left visible. The writer, after no little research, closely determined its site [confirmed after this paper was read].

We cannot know how the House looked, but we have reason to think that it was quaint, low, and yet of considerable size ; the front corners [shown during the excavation described in the note], were on or near the east side of the grass-ground now in the square. Although the uses of the building changed in the course of nearly a century and a half, its importance may fairly be thought great. After briefly using it, the Governor and Court, as already stated, held their sessions in Boston, and a

The walls found coincided almost exactly with the lines in the writer's Plan I (p. 114), in his *Town Life*. (See also *New England Hist. Gen. Register*, 1888, xlii, 307.)

On the lower right hand corner of the City Hall, the Municipal Government has placed a large, oblong bronze tablet inscribed as follows, in full-faced Roman capitals :—

THIS OPEN SPOT MARKS THE SITE OF
THE GREAT HOUSE, BUILT IN 1629,
AND OCCUPIED IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, 1630,
BY THE COURT OF ASSISTANTS, UNDER
GOV. JOHN WINTHROP,
FOR THE PUBLIC BUSINESS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS COLONY,

THE BUILDING REMAINED IN PRIVATE OCCUPANCY
UNTIL BURNT JUNE 17TH, 1775, BY THE BRITISH TROOPS,
IN THE GENERAL DESTRUCTION OF CHARLESTOWN.

meeting-house was erected for public worship. As was natural, the "Great House" must be made of some service, and we find what happened to our Old State House left a kind of orphan before a Bostonian Society had been invented.

In 1635, it was sold to Robert Long, for £30, along with "a Roode and a haufe of ground by estimation" — a favorite early way of measuring. There, until his death, in 1663, he kept an Ordinary, or tavern, called the Three Cranes. His heirs, ten years later, sold the estate to "brother John Long," whose widow, Mary, in 1711, disposed of "the great tavern," as it seemed to have been called, to her son Samuel. Of him, Ebenezer Breed, in the same year bought one-half, and (1712-13) Charles Russell bought, also, one-half of the "3 Crane Tavern," another name. By a different account, Mary Long seems to have left the tavern to Samuel Long in 1729, and his widow, who married George Shore, to have left the "Three Cranes" to her husband. Then, 1746, Thomas, or Nathaniel Brown, innholder, acquired at least the Russell part, and (1766) mortgaged it to the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, the discharge not being made until June 17, 1794. All this is by no means lucid, and is curious rather than important, as the exact site is not made clear, and the whole area became public property after the Revolution.

There seems to be no reason to doubt, however, that the "Great House," although very likely altered, stood

until the town was burned, June 17th, 1775, or to doubt that it was a tavern from 1635 to that date. Placed as it was near the ferry, in the way of the travel between Boston and the North and Northwest, and also the chief tavern of a thriving commercial town, its business appears to have been good. It must have been much used, and known to many persons in Old as well as New England. Yet even references to it are scanty. Among them we learn that in September, 1638, John Josselyn, Gent., there "met with Captain Jackson and others," and walking out "spied a rattle-snake a yard and half long," that ate a good-sized "live chicken," as they were "looking on."* Others who have left notes of their visits in town, received the hospitalities, not of the tavern, but of friends. On them Judge Sewall† often relied. January 30, 1725, he dined there and finished a term of court. John Dunton‡ found Captain Jenner, who treated him "very genteelly," giving "Pudding enough . . . crown'd . . . with a Noble Bowl of Punch," that, he says, "exhilerated" his spirits.

The Provincial and Town records give us little or nothing about the house, but the Laws of 1672, now admirably reproduced under the care of Mr. Wm. H. Whitmore, give us a pretty clear idea of early life there, as well as of the straight and restricted path in which Innkeepers had to go. They must be persons of so-

* Two Voyages to N. E., 25.

† Diary, iii : 348.

‡ Letters, 149.

briety ; they must be licensed and by high license too, for as early as 1648,* if they sold wine they must pay £160 a year. They must "have some inoffensive Sign, obvious for direction of Strangers," and "always be provided with Strong Wholesome Beer," which they should "not sell at above *two pence* the Ale quart." For selling an adulterated article there was a penalty of £5. They were to entertain "Land-travellers, or Seafaring men," also "Strangers, in the night season, . . . during meal-times, or upon lawful business what time their occasion shall require." They were also to provide stabling for horses, to close their houses in meeting time, and not entertain persons forbidden by the selectmen.

"Schollars belonging to the Colledg" were, like children, not to be admitted ; no tobacco was to be used except in a private room ; there were to be no games of shuffle-board or bowling, or for money, or "any Dancing upon any occasion" ; no one was "to Drink Excessively, *viz.* above half a pint of Wine for one person at a time, or to continue Tipling above the space of half an hour," or after 9 o'clock at night, and there was an officer, very like a policeman, to watch everybody. Comforts not to be got elsewhere could not be had at the inn ; this "Tipling" was forbidden in private houses, and anyone who had cards or dice anywhere was fined £5.

* Mass. Rec., ii : 253, and iii : 135.

With such limitations to cheerfulness in doors, there were others close by, outside "The Three Cranes." In the market-place stood the Stocks, the Pillory and the Whipping-post; on the Meeting-house, a few yards distant, was a Cage 12 feet square, for Sabbath-breakers, and in the broad-aisle was a Stool of Repentance.*

If there is not much that is exact or definite about the looks and history of the "Great House," and of the buildings around it, their destruction, all together, was a memorable event, about which, by research, we can form a pretty definite idea. The few printed views extant are, indeed, on such a small scale, and are so vague or evidently inaccurate, that they amount to nothing, and there are only a few scraps of description. Statements to the contrary notwithstanding, there is not a real map or plan of the neighborhood made near the time. Yet by putting together items chiefly found in deeds, and by recalling the style of some of the old buildings still at the "North End," and arranging the information on modern surveys of the ground, we obtain, as already said, a fair result.

In the forenoon of Saturday, June 17, 1775, Charlestown Market-place, now the Square, appeared about in

* The Stocks were for theft, drunkenness, lying and profane swearing; the Pillory for defacing the Records and for forgery; Whipping was inflicted for about thirty offences. In the Cage offenders were exposed until they could be examined by the magistrates. The Stocks and Pillory were abolished in this State in 1813, and the latter in France not until 1832, and in England in 1837.

this way : On the north side was the Meeting-house, a framed building, 72 by 52 feet, 34 feet high, and surmounted by a steeple. In the Market-place was the Court House, apparently with a cupola and a bit of a steeple, — a sort of modest imitation of its bigger neighbor. Set in the foreground, beside or between them, was the “Three Cranes” tavern. Behind this were the two houses of the ministers, thought to be worth a thousand pounds, a third as much as the Meeting-house. Ranged around, and facing the group, were houses and shops of the towns-people.

If the proportion of notable residents was not as large as in 1638, there was a very respectable population. Close by the ministers lived Mary Scottow ; then one of the Austins, formerly very numerous in the town, and next, Nathaniel Gorham, a native, born in 1738. He was a delegate to the Provincial Congress, and subsequently a member of the Board of War, a Judge, delegate to the State Constitutional Convention, and then to the Old Congress, of which he was President in 1786. Of the Convention that framed the Federal Constitution he was for three months Chairman, thus filling one of the highest official positions yet known in the country. Next to him lived Mr. Wait, and in an adjoining house, on the site of the Rev. John Harvard’s, lived Sam. Swan, of a family then prominent in the town, and even more so elsewhere, at a later date. Across the way, the entrance of Main Street, Dr. Isaac

Rand had a house and barn, and by the corner of Warren Street was the estate of N. Dowse. South-eastward were Lemmons, sundry Austins, Wm. Wyer, Odin & Ballard, and Ebenezer Breed, of a family long resident. All of these appear to have had houses, and some of them shops. Next, on the present street to the Old Bridge,* were Russells, — Charles, Sarah, and Thomas. Near them, towards the river, was John Codman, whose father was poisoned at home by his slaves in 1755. Around the ferry-landing was a thick settlement, of which there is not here time to give the particulars. On what is now the northerly end of Warren Avenue lived Richard Cary, of an old and valued family. Besides his dwelling, with brick ends, four rooms on a floor, and a small shop at one end, he had a still-house, wharf, and warehouse. It was, apparently, to this house that “Mr. Mather” went when he escaped from Boston “a day or two before” the town was burned, and where he “lodged his papers and what else he got out,” as stated by Mrs. Adams. There also, the Rev. John Martin called for rest and refreshment early in the afternoon of the eventful Saturday, and found Mr Cary and his son still at home, “when a ball came through” the house, and the reverend gentleman departed for the battle-ground, while the few people left in the town “evacuated with all haste.”

* Old, when this paper was read, but now the New Bridge.

Next door lived the Hon. James Russell, who had a "large mansion," 50 feet front, together with a wharf and warehouse. He was the then living head of a family that was prominent in the town for four generations in church and business, on the bench, and in civil office, and that held its ground on this spot for a century. Like most of the people in the neighborhood, Judge Russell had removed a good deal of his portable personal effects, yet we find that he lost, along with lesser articles, hangings for two rooms that cost over £40, "a silk Head Cloth . . . with carv'd Work'd" (£8), another of "Herrateen" lined with silk (£4), "a large Gilt Leather Screen" (£5), and two gilt-framed pictures (£6). This estate was at the easterly corner of the present Waverly House. Adjoining westerly, and now covered by the same large building, were the estates of Captain Josiah Harris, who claimed for loss of a "hous and workhouses," and of Deacon John Larkin; and beyond them was John Austin. Farther back, in all directions, except southwest, were other buildings of the town burned.

Of one house in this neighborhood, the owner, Captain Samuel Henley, has left us a pretty full description. It was probably one of the best houses, as he was the richest man in the town and sustained the heaviest individual loss, chiefly of buildings, valued £4,941. He was enterprising, was a distiller, trader, church-member, town treasurer, and father of twenty children. One of

his daughters married Sir Grenville Temple. According to his account, his mansion was three stories high, well painted and had "a handsom Turit . . . with an Elic-trick Wyer," for he seems to have watched improvements as made, and promptly tried lightning-rods (invented about 1750, advertised by Franklin in 1753, and not in any general use in the colonies until ten years later). There were five rooms on a floor, and at one end was a Counting Room. "The Best Room," he stated in an extant account, "was finish^d with very handsom Hang-ings which cost me about Twenty three pounds Lawful, and Two Rooms with very good Paper." "Two Rooms" were "winscotted Chair high," and had "Stone hearths and Jams." There was "a very handsom Entry finish^d. with Carv^d. work, winscott and paper," and there were five chambers, the best of them having "a very good paper and a marble hearth that Cost Ten pounds Lawful, and each side the Chimney carv^d. work and win-scott." Under the "whole House" was "a very good Cellar . . . with many plank petitions," and "all the windows in the House" had "Shutters and Iron fast-nings." Three quarters of the mansion had been built only about nine years, "which," he says, "I look upon to be worth at least Farthing £2000. lawful money."

While the Market-place, with these buildings on or near it, was the oldest, and perhaps most prominent, part of the town, it supplied only a moderate portion of the nearly five hundred buildings that formed the great-

est instance of material sacrifice made at the opening of the Revolution.

When and how the fire occurred seems to be pretty definitely settled, although accounts vary. General Gage had told the people that he would destroy the town if they allowed it to be made a base of operations hostile to the British. On the eventful Saturday the Provincials had entrenched themselves, and it was reported to him that others of them were firing on his troops from some of the houses. Statements in print that there were no houses that could thus be used are very erroneous. Operations in Charlestown against the royal forces were becoming decidedly striking, and the General kept his word. There is a difference of several hours as to the time, but it was probably about three o'clock in the afternoon. From a battery on Copps' Hill shells were thrown towards the Market-place, and from the "Somerset" frigate men landed eastward and kindled flames. The Meeting-house was a conspicuous mark, and the conflagration may have begun there. A large amount of combustible material and buildings scattered through the town helped, with an easterly wind, to accelerate destruction.

The Market-place, like most of the settled part of the peninsula, was left in dismal ruin, much of it to remain so for years. Incalculable suffering and loss were inflicted, from which many persons and families recovered with difficulty, or never at all. Some help to

individuals was extended, but for the property burned, it might be said, not a sixpence was paid by State or Nation. Attempts at sundry times to obtain some indemnity for losses form, indeed, a wretched story of disappointments. One consolatory thought comes to the speaker, after examining the nearly five hundred detailed claims that were called for, and made; it is, that the loss to literature and art was less than has been supposed.

While we now find only the buildings and pursuits of common daily life in Charlestown Square, and little at first sight to stir the imagination, it becomes, on acquaintance, one of the most interesting historic spots in this region, — one that in associations compares well with places that attract us abroad. It is the site of the first important establishment of religion and law in what we now call Boston, and was the centre of one of the most startling scenes at the opening of the Revolution.

Forward in words and acts for liberty, the people of that old town shunned no risks. Charlestown was rebel to the backbone, — unanimously, we might say, — for it had only one tory, — a man like some other persons who have thought it not a nice place. He moved. The people proved their patriotism and took the consequences. They were left with honest hearts, clear consciences, and depleted pocket-books; with the American privilege of helping themselves, and very fairly they did. At the same time their sacrifices brought a large

reward, for those sacrifices were among the strongest incitements in rousing their countrymen to the struggle for our national life.

No commonplace ground, or home of commonplace people, is, and has been, that Very Old Corner of Boston.*

* The *Frothinghams*, William and Anna, not mentioned above, came to Charlestown in 1630, and signed the Covenant at the reorganization of the Church in 1632. The family estate that, then or later, extended much of the way across the peninsula, was up the Country Road over half a mile from the Market-place. The numerous Americans bearing their family name appear to be descended from them; where they came from, seems never yet to have been correctly stated in print.

In *another Very Old Corner of Boston*—the Old Burial Ground of Charlestown—among several early stones is the gravestone of Anna, inscribed ANNA | FROTHINGHAM | AGED 67 | YEARES | DIED Ye 28 OF | IVLY 1674. Some time ago the writer found this memorial split from top to bottom and had it securely repaired, so that it seems able to last through at least another century. Anna was a subject of James I, born in the early part of his reign; near-by are stones of at least four residents of Charlestown, born subjects of Queen Elizabeth. Stones of Anna's descendants in unbroken line to the writer's grandmother are also standing near.

In his "Century of Town Life," pp. 74-79 (1888), the writer gave names, dates and some account of the early stones—eight dated before 1670; thirty-one, 1670-79; fifty-three, 1680-89, and sixty-six, 1690-1700; in all 158. While few or no traces of the early people are now seen in the Market-place, many remain in this other Old Corner.



Search for suitable, or any, illustrations for this paper, impresses one with the scantiness, or rather absence, of anything of the sort. A moderate number of portraits of local subjects were engraved in Boston through about a generation before the Revolution, but of views there was a notable lack. The writer does not remember any detailed view of Charlestown or its buildings in or before 1775, and the few contemporary views of the battle and conflagration, now very rare, are, in details, next to impossibilities. In his "Town Life" he has, by reproduction, given examples.

J. F. H.

JEAN LEFEBVRE DE CHEVERUS

BY

FRANCIS HURTUBIS, JR.



JEAN LEFEBVRE DE CHEVERUS,

FIRST CATHOLIC BISHOP OF BOSTON.

A PAPER READ TO THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER,
OLD STATE HOUSE, APRIL 12, 1904, BY

FRANCIS HURTUBIS, JR.



IN chosen men and women," says a great philosopher, "I find somewhat in form, speech, and manners, which is not of their person and family, but of a humane, catholic, and spiritual character, and we love them as the sky. They have a largeness of suggestion, and their face and manners carry a certain grandeur, like time and justice."

No one can study the life of Jean Lefebvre de Cheverus, first Catholic Bishop of Boston, and not be deeply impressed by his character. Its grandeur was indeed like that of time and justice. Here was a man rich in virtues, a lover of peace and good works, in fine, a godly man. His simple and touching piety, his charity, his sin-

cerity, honesty, and Christianity, won to him the hearts of his fellow-men.

A century ago he came a stranger to this ancient city, and for twenty-seven years lived and labored in New England, — lived and labored in such a way as not only to dispel much of the hostility prevalent at that time towards people of his religious belief, but also to command admiration for himself and respect for his flock. Well and truly might the people of Massachusetts, aye, of New England, say to him upon his return to his native France :

“ You have fed the hungry and clothed the naked ; brought back the wandering ; reclaimed the vicious ; shared the joys of the happy ; softened the pain of the suffering ; held the medicinal cup to the sick and parched lip ; and taught the dying that, through faith and repentance, he might repose his hopes on the bosom of Redeeming Love.

“ Most spiritual guides go no farther than to instruct in spiritual matters ; but you have not stopped there, nor there considered your work as finished ; for you have come down, as it were, from the altar of God, to the common offices of mankind, to give us council and direction in our temporal concerns. We believe it seldom happens, that one so devoted to things divine, should be so wise in the business of the world ; but this wisdom has not been shown by collecting perishable riches for yourself ; but in striving to increase intelligence, comfort, and respectability among the people of your charge.

“ At your approach, discord fled from among us ; for in every lecture, in every strain of devotion, you have breathed the mild and holy spirit of the new commandment, to calm the irritations and quiet the heart burnings incident to frail humanity ; and we trust in grace that this example and these instructions will have a salutary influence on our lives, when you are no longer with us to advise and direct us in the paths of duty, virtue, and religion.”

To Bostonians of to-day, — when men are rated at their true worth, and when no man’s advancement is denied on account of race, color, creed, or previous condition of servitude, — the spirit of intolerance prevailing in this city and throughout New England a hundred years ago towards a believer in Catholicity, cannot be fully realized. Catholics indeed found themselves upon inhospitable soil.

The Puritans of those days, like their ancestors of Old England, were men of stern character, self-will and sturdy faith. They had come to America to seek freedom to worship God as they themselves willed, — indeed a laudable ambition, — but when others followed to do likewise, these same sturdy Puritans, either through ignorance or misinformation as to Catholic doctrines and practices, could not but look with suspicion upon those who believed in such doctrines and practices. In fact adherents of the Catholic Church were regarded as nothing less than believers in errors dangerous to the liberty of the citizen, and to the welfare of the State.

But that the Church was not antagonistic either to the liberty of the citizen or to the welfare of the State, has long since been generally conceded. In those days, the Church, in principle and in practice, was a great conservative force and a safe moral teacher of millions, and it is to-day. No Church has done more, or is doing more to infuse into the minds of the people a spirit of obedience to law, than the Catholic Church; and no Church is to-day striving harder to safeguard the vital interests of the individual and to maintain the integrity of the family relation. "From both a religious and economic point of view," it has but lately been declared by a distinguished secular periodical, "the Catholic Church is coming to be regarded as a sheet anchor of society. Where else is there to be found a rampart against skepticism on the one hand and against socialism on the other?"

It is not my purpose to-day, however, to discuss the past, the present, or the future aims of the Catholic Church, but rather to speak of one of its pioneers, the sweetness of whose fame has left in our land an unextinguishable trace. In view of the recent elaborate and impressive centennial celebration of the dedication of the first Catholic church in New England, it may be not without interest, in passing, to draw roughly a comparison of the condition of the Church to-day and that of a century ago.

At the time of the arrival in Boston of Jean Lefebvre de Cheverus, there was but one priest to minister to the small flock of Catholics, which was then spread over all New England; and there was no regular place of worship. The people at that time congregated in the larger private houses of the adherents of the faith, and as often as it was possible. To-day, at the beginning of the year 1903, the archdiocese of Boston alone has a Catholic population of about 700,000. Instructing and guiding this great army are one archbishop, one bishop, 442 secular priests, 103 priests of religious orders, and 1,599 religious women. There are 162 churches, with resident priests, and 52 missions — a total of 214 churches, maintained by the Catholics of the archdiocese. There are maintained by these Catholics, also, one seminary for diocesan clergy, with 98 students; one normal school for brothers; eight academies for young women, with 961 pupils; 75 parish and mission schools, with 44,538 pupils; six orphan asylums; one infant asylum; one school for deaf mutes; four industrial and reform schools; five hospitals, caring for 59,380 persons of both sexes; seven homes with 862 inmates; and a total of 48,312 young persons under the care of Catholics.

These figures tell more eloquently than any words of mine the story of the marvellous growth of the Church during the century that has just passed, and of the important place which it occupies in our midst to-day.

In the city of Mayenne, the capital of the ancient province of the Lower Maine, in France, there was born of a distinguished family, on the 28th of January, 1768, Jean Lefebvre de Cheverus. For several generations his family had been invested with the magistracy of the city, and honored with general esteem and confidence. At the time of his birth, his immediate relatives held all the principal offices in his native city. His father possessed the judicial power, under the title of General Civil Judge and Lieutenant of Police of the city and duchy of Mayenne; his father's eldest brother held the ecclesiastical power as rector of the principal parish; while his father's second brother was invested with the civil power, as mayor.

The mother of Cheverus, it is recorded, was a woman of rare qualities, and to her Cheverus owed much of the gentleness of manner and amenity of disposition which distinguished him throughout his life. It was she who filled him "with the fear of God, the habit of prayer, love of neighbor, charity for the poor, compassion for the afflicted, and a love for whatever is good, honest, and virtuous."

During his early youth, Cheverus attended the college of his native city. At twelve years of age he received the tonsure, and shortly afterwards he was tendered and accepted a scholarship in the College of Louis-le-Grand, in Paris.

While at this famous college he became convinced that the stricter and more frequent and appropriate devotional exercises of a seminary would be more agreeable to him than those of the institution which he was attending, and learning that an examination of candidates for vacant places at the Seminary of St. Magloire was to be held, he presented himself, was examined, and obtained the first place. In this institution he was extremely happy ; and during the remainder of his life he never spoke of St. Magloire, or of its inmates, but with tenderness and gratitude. "Blessed years, passed at the Seminary," he was wont to say, "the fairest of my life. Happy days, when my duties were so easy, my life so serene, my soul so tranquil, and everybody so kind and indulgent to me."

At the seminary Cheverus made a specialty of ecclesiastical studies, and delved long and earnestly into Hebrew, the Greek writings of the fathers of the Church, and into the works of the Latin philosophers. He particularly delighted in purifying and polishing his speech ; and so far did he carry his studies in that direction, that later he often reproached himself for devoting so much time to the niceties of language that might have been employed in the acquisition of other kinds of knowledge. With the customary attendance upon the lectures at the Sorbonne, to which institution all the seminaries of Paris were obliged to send their pupils, Cheverus com-

pleted his course of theological studies, to the satisfaction and delight of his instructors.

In the second year of his licentiate he was ordained a deacon, and soon afterwards, in view of the difficulties which at that time menaced religion in France, a dispensation was obtained, and Cheverus, then scarcely twenty-three years of age, was ordained a priest, at the last public ordination held in Paris prior to the Revolution. He at once began his work in the ministry as curate at Mayenne, being honored with the title of canon. But it was a woeful time for the Church. Poverty, persecution, and death were all that a young priest could look for; yet this prospect did not cause Cheverus to falter in his chosen path.

The next year, upon refusing to take the schismatical oaths which the Revolutionists were trying to force upon all the Catholic clergy, he was driven from the church, and allowed to officiate only in his father's house. In 1791, he was forced to leave Mayenne altogether. This was indeed to him a great hardship, which we can readily understand when we recollect that but a short time before his family held the principal offices of the city, and had long been highly esteemed. After constant surveillance and occasional imprisonment, — but not until after the Convention passed a decree banishing priests, — did Cheverus decide to leave France. To resist further seemed to him futile, and so disguising himself as a layman he departed for England. There his situation

was a painful one. He was among a foreign people without an acquaintance, ignorant of their language, and with only 300 francs in his possession. But painful as was this situation, Cheverus did not permit it materially to affect his spirit. He at once began the study of English. In this his natural quickness of mind and his scholarship enabled him to make such rapid advances, that before three months had elapsed he became a teacher of French and mathematics in a boarding school for young people.

Shortly afterwards he sought an interview with Bishop Douglas, of London, and proving himself sufficiently acquainted with the English language to perform acceptably the duties of a priest, he obtained permission to exercise all the ecclesiastical functions in the district in which he resided. Thus empowered he visited Catholics in the vicinity, induced them to assemble on Sundays and holy days, and preached to them as their chaplain.

His preaching soon drew to him such a numerous and exemplary congregation that he began to entertain the belief that once more he was among friends. The rooms of private houses in which he preached were ere long found to be too small to accommodate his followers, and so a chapel was procured, as well as lodgings for the ecclesiastics who took part in the services. Having secured a congregation, a place of worship, and a home, he severed his connection with the school, and thenceforth devoted his entire days to missionary work.

But while Cheverus was thus happily employed laboring in Old England, fate was planning for him fields of labor of which he had not dreamed. At that time efforts were being made to establish a Catholic Church in New England. Since August, 1792, Francis Anthony Mantignon, a French refugé, who, prior to his exile was a professor at the Sorbonne, — a high-minded clergyman, distinguished no less for his piety than for his talents, zeal, and prudence, — had been quietly uniting a flock in Boston. The boundaries of the city, however, were not the limits of his field of labor; they embraced all New England, and included also the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes of Indians. While at that time there were not many Catholics in this broad territory, they were so widely scattered that it was quite beyond the capacity of one man to minister to their wants in a manner which was wholly satisfactory to both shepherd and flock. Mantignon felt, therefore, the necessity of securing an assistant. To obtain just the man needed, however, was no easy task. Good missionaries were obtainable, but Mantignon felt that the arrival in the community of another priest would be certain to arouse additional suspicion and hostility. He saw the need, therefore, of finding one whose qualities would reduce the hostility to a minimum. A man was needed who possessed not only piety and zeal, but tact, scholarship, and refined manners as well. With these in mind, Mantignon prayerfully turned his eyes across the sea to Cheverus,

who had been a student under him at the Sorbonne, and appealed to him to become his assistant.

After consultation with his friends, but against their wishes and protests, Cheverus yielded to the appeal; and sailing from England, he reached Boston on the 3rd of October, 1796. A short stay at the French inn, — the old Hancock House in Corn Court, — and Cheverus went to live with Dr. Mantignon at the latter's residence in Leverett's Lane. Then began a rare intimacy between the two exiles, — one of twenty-eight years and the other of forty-two.

In order to assure his superiors that he was ready for work, Cheverus, immediately upon his arrival, wrote to Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, a cousin of Charles Carroll, signer of the Declaration of Independence, — "Send me where you think I am most needed, without making yourself anxious about the means of supporting me. I am willing to work with my hands, if need be, and I believe I have strength enough to do it."

The following summer, Bishop Carroll sent him to Maine, to look after the Catholic Indians there. These Indians, under their famous chiefs Orono and Ambrose Var, had, at Washington's invitation, and under a promise of receiving "a black robe," or French priest, lent their assistance during the Revolution; but for one reason or another it had been found almost impossible to fulfill the promise made them, although Rousselet's visit to the Penobscots indicates an effort in that direction.

The State agent among the Indians, John L. Allan, who had commanded them in the war and was aware of their virtues, had, in 1791, recalled the promise to Bishop Carroll, and he had sent the Abbé Ciquard to them ; but Ciquard's removal to Canada, some time afterwards, left the Indians without a priest until Cheverus visited them in 1797.

To Cheverus, the experience of wandering for a year through the dense forests of Maine, hundreds of miles from Boston, to preach to the savages of the wilderness, proved full of romantic interest, notwithstanding the hardships and privations which he had to suffer. To the Indians, the kindness and society of the good priest was immensely pleasing, and there grew up in their hearts an affection for him that was later entertained by the finer and more discriminating men of the civilized communities. In truth the affection of the Red men was so strong that he could tear himself away from them only by promising to visit them again. This he did in the following year ; then the State granted an annual salary of two hundred dollars for a missionary, and Rev. James Romagné, a townsman of Cheverus, subsequently labored among the Indians for nearly a score of years.

In those days Boston was an intellectual and progressive town of twenty odd thousand inhabitants, built on a hilly spur which was much like an island. Here were nineteen edifices for public worship, many of which were

ornamented with beautiful spires, with clocks and bells. Even then the town was famous for its schools, and for learned and charitable societies. The principal manufactures consisted of "rum, loaf sugar, beer, sail-cloth, cordage, wool and cotton cards, playing cards, pot and pearl ashes, paper hangings, hats, plate glass, tobacco, and chocolate." Furthermore, there were "thirty distilleries, two breweries, eight sugar houses, and eleven ropewalks." Another evidence of the progress of the town is gathered from the fact that twenty different stages ran through the place weekly. Practically all the business and culture, the wealth and life of the town were in the hands of the descendants of the earlier settlers; yet here it was that Mantignon and Cheverus entertained the hope of erecting a Catholic church. The Rev. John Thayer, formerly a Protestant minister, but later a Catholic priest, had earlier attempted to found a church but had failed; and with this failure before them, Mantignon and Cheverus felt that to succeed it would be necessary for them to proceed with the greatest circumspection.

To them, the first essential was to eradicate the prejudice against the Faith by exhibiting lives wholly apostolical, by observing the law of charity in all their intercourse, and in being always mild and gentle in their language. A new and touching sight, it is recorded, was then witnessed in Boston:—two men, examples of every virtue, living together as brothers, without dis-

inction of property, with no difference of purpose or of will ; always ready to yield to each other, to anticipate each other in rendering the most polite and delicate attentions ; possessing, in truth, but one heart and one soul ; filled with the same desire — that of doing good ; the same inclinations — those which tend to virtue ; and the same love of whatever is good, upright, and charitable. In the simplicity of their mutual relations there was always something great and noble, in unison with the elevation of their sentiments and the dignity of their characters.

“Those who witnessed the manner in which they lived together ” says a contemporary Protestant journal, “will never forget the refinement and elevation of their friendship ; it surpassed those attachments which delight us in classical story, and equalled the lovely union of the son of Saul and the minstrel of Israel.” And to this tribute the same periodical added these no less beautiful words :

“In contemplating them, who can doubt that human nature is permitted to approach perfection, and assume a near and sweet resemblance to the Man Divine. The Pagan world was full of instances of lofty and virtuous conduct, which dignified and exalted human nature. The hero, the seer, and the sage, had existed before Christianity was known ; but the saint is a character which has been added to the catalogue since. Socrates, the wise and good, had not, like St. John, a Master’s bosom on which to lean his head, where all was purity and love.”

We are also told that to the example of the union which religion could render so perfect, they added that of a life of poverty and privation, but honorable and dignified, passed wholly in prayer, in study, or in the labors of the ministry. They did good whenever an occasion presented itself, and "blushed to find it fame." They exhausted their strength in journeyings and toils; travelling on foot, at all hours of the day and night, and at all seasons of the year, to carry, often many miles' distance, consolation to the afflicted, words of reconciliation to families at variance. In short, they sacrificed themselves without reserve for their fellow-men, and regarded all their sacrifices as nothing. It was clearly evident that no interested motives influenced them; that they expected no reward in this world, neither fortune nor glory; and that all their hopes were in Heaven. Whoever approached them always met with a kind and gracious reception. Whoever had a favor to ask found them always obliging, and happy to do a kindness. So that, wherever they were seen, they were recognized as men different from others, — possessing more lofty sentiments, souls more filled with love, hearts more generous; in a word, as men of God, — as apostles.

It was these virtues in Mantignon and Cheverus which turned the hostile feelings of Bostonians into respect and admiration for them and their work. But Cheverus had other qualities which were none the less endearing. He was distinctly a scholar. He loved to revel in the works

of the great masters whenever he found a moment's leisure, and he took particular pleasure in committing to memory many fine passages from their writings. He himself was a master of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, and in addition, to his recently acquired knowledge of English, he had, after coming to America, become quite familiar with the language of the Indians of Maine. "He seemed," it is said, "to pass from business, and from the altar, to the groves of the Academy by a private path of his own, and then return to his duties with new vigor, from drinking at the fountains and culling the undying flowers of the Muse."

It was these qualities in Cheverus which won for him the friendship of such leading men as W. T. Shaw, Josiah Quincy, Theodore Lyman, Harrison Gray Otis, John Lowell, Richard Derby, and many others identified with the highest culture of the town. They were men with literary tastes similar to his own, and for this reason Cheverus frequently gathered with them at the Anthology Club, (a Club out of which grew the Boston Athenaeum), whose headquarters were on Franklin street, not far from his residence.

The reading room of the Club started modestly, but became deservedly popular. There were there the best of publications obtainable, and among these publications is noted a list of valuable French periodicals. Although there is no definite record of the fact, it is believed that their presence in the Club was largely due to Cheverus.

The records of the Boston Athenaeum give no hint of Cheverus' connection with it, during its early years, and Quincy makes no mention of him in his valuable history. But among the documents which have been preserved by the Athenaeum is a letter written by Bishop Cheverus, shortly before his departure for France, which is not without interest here. It was addressed to Theodore Lyman, one of the trustees of the library.

BOSTON, Sept. 25, 1823.

Dear and Honoured Sir: —

Your kind letter written at the desire of the respectable trustees of the Athenaeum has been duly and gratefully received. The trustees as well as my other fellow citizens of Boston, are disposed to exaggerate the little that I have been able to do, but they can never rate too high my love and devotedness to them, and nothing but what I believe to be an imperious duty could ever tear me from them.

I shall be happy in being an agent and correspondent for the Boston Athenaeum, and to give some tokens to the proprietors of my affection and remembrance.

I send with this a fac-simile of the testament of Louis the 16th and his horribly calumniated consort. It will perhaps enhance the value of these interesting documents when my literary friends know that they have often been bedewed with my tears.

Assure the trustees of my grateful sense of the honour they confer upon me by their letter, and accept my thanks for the handsome manner in which you have conveyed their sentiments.

I have the honour to be with sincere and affectionate respect, dear and honoured sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

† JOHN CHEVERUS.

In accordance with the promise contained in this letter, Cheverus presented to the Athenaeum the following books : —

Essais de Montaigne. Quarto, 3 vols., Paris, 1725.

Fournmount, *Réflexions sur l'origine des Anciens Peuples.* 2 vols., Paris, 1747.

Pausanias, *Voyage Historique de la Grèce.* Quarto, 2 vols., Paris, 1747.

Oeuvres de Boileau. Octavo, 6 vols., Paris, 1778.

Histoire Universelle de Diodoe Licule. Duodecimo, 7 vols., Paris, 1737.

Discussion Amicale sur l'Eglise Anglicane. Octavo, London, 1817.

Vertot, *Roman Revolution.* Octavo, 2 vols., London, 1740.

Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem. Octavo, 3 vols., Paris, 1812.

Discours sur l'Histoire de France. Octavo, 19 vols., Paris, 1777.

Of Cheverus' nature and of the esteem in which he was held by prominent contemporaries, we get additional light in the form of a few anecdotes that have come down to us. In the entertaining memoirs of Josiah Quincy, second Mayor of Boston, we find the following regarding Cheverus :

Cheverus was greatly esteemed by my father, who was fond of relating the manner in which their acquaintance

began. One day, near the beginning of the century, he was driving from Quincy to Boston in a pelting storm. When about five miles from his destination, he overtook a foot passenger, who, drenched and draggled, was plodding along the miry road. My father drew up his horse, and called to the stranger to get in and ride with him.

‘That would be scarcely fair,’ was the man’s reply. ‘My clothes are soaked with water, and would spoil the cushions of your chaise, to say nothing of the wetting I could not avoid giving you.’

These objections were made light of, and with some difficulty the wayfarer was persuaded to take the offered seat. During the ride my father learned that his companion was a priest named Cheverus, who was walking from Hingham, whither he had been to perform some offices connected with his profession ; and thus commenced the acquaintance which afterward ripened into friendship, between men whose beliefs and ways of life were outwardly so different.

At a dinner in honor of John Adams, President of the United States, given by the town of Boston, the highest places were reserved for Adams and Cheverus. President Adams, impressed by this high mark of esteem for the minister of a religion heretofore so utterly disliked in the community, could not refrain from remarking to Father Cheverus : “What most astonishes me on this occasion is to find myself here and to see you here.”

When the British fleet menaced Boston in 1814, Cheverus, then a Bishop, labored with pick and shovel on the earth-works thrown up in defence of his adopted town.

One morning, before daylight, a resident of Water Street heard the sound of sawing in the yard of a house occupied by a poor, sick, working woman. Approaching, he beheld the Bishop hard at work, sawing up a quantity of wood, which, it appears, he had previously sent her. Refusing help, this apostle of Christianity insisted on finishing his work; then, shouldering his horse and saw, he walked home.

Cheverus himself lived in one small room, with a few chairs, and whenever there were not enough of these, his visitors sat on the bed. But while his abode was poor, there was always the greatest neatness and order about the place. His table was always frugal; yet on Sundays and holy days, Catholics coming from a distance to see him, or to attend services, were invited to partake of his hospitality.

Catholics, of course, highly venerated the good man; and so desirous were they of showing their affection for him, that many Catholic parents wished their sons to be called John, because that was the Christian name of Bishop Cheverus. One day, at a baptism, after Cheverus had become a Bishop, an incident connected with this cordial feeling for him occurred. The Bishop having, as usual, asked the godfather and godmother, "What name will you give this child?" they replied, "John Bishop Cheverus." "Poor child," rejoined he, "God forbid that you should ever become a Bishop!"

To show that Catholics were not alone in manifesting their regard for Cheverus, it is only necessary to quote the following from a response made by him to an interrogation of the Holy See. "In this country," he wrote, "where only a few years since, the Catholic Church was anathematized, and the name of priest was held in horror, we are now respected and beloved ; we are thought well of and are kindly treated." While among the ministers of different sects, we are informed, these sentiments were so profound that they sometimes invited him to preach in their churches. Calling to mind the fact that St. Paul preached in the synagogues as well as in Christian assemblies, and feeling justified in imitating him, Cheverus graciously accepted these invitations, choosing for the subject of his discourse some doctrine of the Catholic Church. It is said that he invariably preached with so much judgment and propriety, that, far from offending any one, his audience was always satisfied. Some were convinced, and all had, at least, some of their prejudices removed.

A Protestant journal, in giving an account of a sermon preached by Cheverus in a Presbyterian church, says : "It is certain that his discourses are well calculated to remove prejudices against the Catholics : and the moderation, and even affection, with which he speaks of men of a different belief from his own, forms a striking contrast to the violent and angry language that sometimes dishonors Protestant pulpits."

His manner of preaching may be better understood by an example. One day he proposed to preach upon the adoration of the cross. He began by a distinct declaration, that, in this act of worship, Jesus Christ, the God-man, is alone adored; and that the cross is honored only as the image which represents Him to us. Then, entering upon his subject, he said: "Let us suppose that you are about to fall by the sword of an enemy, and that a generous man, seeing this, throws himself between you and the assassin, and saves your life by the sacrifice of his own. A painter, struck by this act of heroism, makes a portrait of the generous man, and presents him to your view, bathed in his blood, and covered with wounds. What do you do? You seize upon it with love and gratitude, press it to your lips, bedew it with your tears, and think your heart can never feel enough. My brethen, this is the whole Catholic doctrine of the adoration of the cross. It is not for the mind to reason about, but for the heart to experience, all those feelings with which it must be inspired by the image of God, who died that we might live."

Unfortunately his sermons have not been preserved. We are told, however, that they were master-pieces of diction, of imagery, and of scriptural parable. The meanest understood them; the great admired them. His sole aim was to simplify the profundities of thought, and his words were treasured as with a "holy joy." "His eloquence," declared a journal of his day, "was of

a most persuasive order ; everything he said seemed to flow from pure and lofty feelings. His sermons were succinct and sweet effusions of piety and affection. The seraphim seemed to have touched his lips with a coal from the altar of the Most High."

It is regrettable that we possess little or nothing from Cheverus' pen. All that has come down to us is an admirable paper on the subject of indulgences and persecution, published in the *Monthly Anthology* of Boston, on April 7, 1807, an edition of the *New Testament* in French, a Roman Catholic *Manual* which appeared about 1811, and a few excerpts from letters and speeches.

Before many years had elapsed the brilliant reputation of Cheverus reached the Bishop of Baltimore, who, impressed with his surpassing talents and virtues, tendered him the charge of St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia. But Cheverus felt so keenly the thought of leaving his devoted friend and co-worker, that he begged to be excused from accepting the highly honorable office, and was finally permitted to remain in Boston.

Soon afterwards Mantignon and Cheverus believed that the time was ripe to execute their cherished design of erecting a church. As yet there was no edifice in Boston which answered the needs of the Catholics. Hitherto, services had been celebrated in private houses, but these were now deemed unsuitable and inadequate. Cheverus, therefore, concluded to open a subscription list for a church fund, and was favored in having for his first

contributor the second President of the United States. Following the name of Adams were those of the flower of the Boston aristocracy, — Messrs. Otis, Peabody, Sears, Crowinshield, Lyman, Coolidge, Preble, Andrew, Weld, Hunnewell, Russell, Perkins, Sturgis, Dexter, and Parker. They, with others, contributed \$3,433; the Catholics contributed \$10,771.69, while other contributions amounting to \$1,948.83 were received from outside Catholic sources. The cost of the new building was to be \$20,000.

Charles Bulfinch, the foremost architect of his day, the designer of our splendid capitol, freely tendered plans for the new church. These plans were gratefully accepted, and, as an expression of its appreciation, the congregation presented Mr. Bulfinch with an artistic silver urn valued at \$200.

The building was erected on the southwest corner of Franklin and Devonshire Streets. It was built of brick, on a stone foundation, 80 feet long by 60 feet wide, of the Ionic order of architecture, severely simple, but imposing by its very lack of ostentation. A basement nine feet high ran under the entire building, and in the interior of the church were two galleries and a choir loft. An altar piece representing the Crucifixion was painted by Henry Sargent for a nominal sum, and Gen. E. Hasket Derby presented a bell. On the 29th of September, 1803, the church was dedicated. A Gregorian High Mass was sung in honor of the event; Bishop Carroll officiated and was assisted by four priests. Chev-

erus preached the sermon, and it is said that Bishop Carroll was so affected by the eloquence of the speaker that he afterwards embraced him.

The following account is taken from the *Columbian Centinel* and *Massachusetts Federalist* for Saturday, Oct. 1, 1803:

"On Thursday last, the Roman Catholic Church in this town was consecrated under the denomination of the Holy Cross, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Carroll. A little before ten o'clock the Bishop, in his pontifical dress, with four priests and their attendants, walked in procession from the residence of the Spanish Consul to the Church; and after the ceremonies usual on such occasions, High Mass was celebrated by the venerable prelate.

A sermon was preached by the Rev. John Cheverus, and a collection of two hundred and eighty-six dollars was made for the benefit of the church. The sermon ended by the singing of the 'Te Deum.' The church was extremely crowded, and the Roman Catholics regret that it was not in their power to accommodate many of those who wished to attend therein. To-morrow the Rev. Bishop will, after High Mass, administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. The church is adorned with a very excellent picture of 'The Crucifixion,' from the pencil of Mr. Henry Sargent."

The event excited the deepest interest throughout New England. The church at once became a field for the most ardent and indefatigable zeal of the Abbé Cheverus. All the services were performed there with

a solemnity which much impressed the people, and which attracted as large congregations as the Church could accommodate.

While Cheverus was devoting himself to the advancement of all who sought his assistance (as he had done all his life), conditions were developing for his advancement to the high honors of the episcopal office. Bishop Carroll, desirous of increasing the progress of the Church in the United States, deemed it expedient to establish four new bishoprics. For the bishopric of Boston, Bishop Carroll had fixed on the Abbé Mantignon, believing him to have claims for it over those of Cheverus on account of his age, learning, and reputation as a doctor and late professor at the Sorbonne. But Mantignon learning of the intention of Bishop Carroll, urged that the office be given to Cheverus. To this the Bishop of Baltimore consented. On the 8th day of April, 1808, Pius VII issued his brief, erecting Baltimore into an archbishopric, and establishing four suffragan bishoprics, one at Bardstown, Kentucky, one at Philadelphia, one at New York, and one at Boston. Upon the arrival of the papal bull Cheverus went to Baltimore, and on All Saints' Day, 1810, he was consecrated Bishop of Boston in the cathedral at Baltimore.

On the 4th of the following November, Bishop Cheverus preached in the cathedral at Baltimore, at the consecration of M. Flaget, who had been appointed first Bishop of Bardstown. After this ceremony a meeting



JÉAN LEFEBVRE DE CHEVERUS
1768 — 1836

of the Archbishop and the four new Bishops of America was called, for the purpose of agreeing upon regulations for the administration of the Church in the United States, and upon the conclusion of the deliberations Bishop Cheverus returned to Boston.

Again in Boston, Cheverus though now a Bishop, was the same simple, modest, kindly man. There was no change in his relations with the Abbé Mantignon, nor with others. He, of course, fully appreciated the importance of his high office, but the honor that had come to him made no difference in his feelings or conduct. His mission was to comfort and educate, to guide and elevate those who were under his charge, or those who came to him for consolation and advice; and so he continued to feel and act during all his days as Bishop of Boston.

In 1815, Archbishop Carroll died, and the Church in the United States suffered a severe loss. This was the more sensibly felt on account of the successor whom he left, — the Rev. Fr. Neale, — being old and infirm. The venerable man felt deeply the embarrassment of his situation, and realized fully his want of physical strength. He therefore petitioned the Holy See to associate with him as his coadjutor the Bishop of Boston, but Cheverus would not listen to the proposition. He believed it wiser to remain with the infant church in Boston, and, after a conference with Archbishop Neale, wrote to Rome in remonstrance.

“The church of Boston has become to me a dearly beloved spouse,” he said, “and I have never thought of abandoning her. It is the universal opinion, as it is also mine, that the Catholic religion would suffer serious injury from my removal, and the introduction of a new Bishop, unknown to the people and a stranger to their characters. The diocese of Baltimore has priests much more worthy than myself (I say it before God, and in the sincerity of my soul), especially among the Jesuit Fathers, whose excellent qualities, whose piety, zeal, and indefatigable labors are above all praise. The Seminary of Baltimore likewise affords men truly apostolical, and two among them, already chosen Bishops, are the joy and pride of the Church of the United States. I pray, then, most earnestly, that some one more worthy than myself may be selected, as Assistant Bishop of Baltimore.”

After considerable reflection, Archbishop Neale decided in favor of M. Maréchal, a distinguished priest of St. Sulpicius, who had already been thought of for the See of Philadelphia, and requested that he be made Assistant Bishop of Baltimore. Cheverus had suggested Maréchal to the Archbishop, and when he was informed of the Archbishop's decision, he wrote to Rome, to express his satisfaction, and to ask the favor of not being separated from his church in Boston.

“I have suffered,” he says in this letter, “and my heart has been continually agitated by fear, lest the obedience which I owe to His Holiness, and which must always be the

rule of my conduct, should force me to abandon my beloved flock. But to fear and anxiety have succeeded peace and happiness, since I learned the nomination of M. Maréchal as Assistant Bishop of Baltimore. Now I pray, I supplicate, I entreat, with heartfelt earnestness, that I may never be transferred to any other diocese ; that I may be permitted to consecrate all my cares to my small but beloved flock ; to sacrifice to it all that I have, to sacrifice myself. I shall rejoice to see M. Maréchal in the exercise of the episcopal office in that city, where he and his colleagues, the priests of St. Sulpicius, have been the guides and models of the clergy, and have obtained universal respect."

The decision which was reached, to allow Cheverus to remain Bishop of Boston, gave general satisfaction to the people of New England, and it was well for the Church that this decision was reached, for on the 19th of September, 1818, the Abbé Mantignon, whose health had for some time been declining, passed away. Cheverus had watched and nursed him for a considerable time, with all the tenderness, affection and sensibility of which his soul was capable, and the passing of the venerable man proved to him a great affliction, for Cheverus had honored Mantignon as his guide, and loved him as a father. At the funeral ceremonies Bishop Cheverus chose to preside himself, in order that he might pay the last duties to his worthy friend. At the conclusion of the solemn and splendid rites of the Church, the body was borne to the grave in procession through the streets

of the town with mournful chants, with the Bishop, dressed in his ecclesiastical garments and with the mitre on his head, surrounded by Catholics in tears. The scene was a novel one for the people of Boston, but they respected the funeral ceremonies, and by their silence and orderly demeanor, showed that they honored the grief of the Bishop and the memory of his friend.

In chronicling the event, the *Boston Commercial Gazette* of September 24, said: "Few persons have descended to the grave more beloved for their piety, their Christian fortitude and resignation, or more honored for their zeal and active benevolence."

The death of Mantignon proved a great loss to Cheverus. It left him, in his opinion, alone and desolate, notwithstanding the fact that he was surrounded by many persons who loved him exceedingly ; and it placed upon his shoulders alone all the burdens and responsibilities of looking after the increasing number of Catholics, both as priest and Bishop. In addition to these burdens he suffered much inconvenience and annoyance from asthma, which at this time seemed to be making alarming progress. But notwithstanding his ailments and the increasing demands upon his time, he insisted upon performing personally every possible duty.

Before many years had passed, however, his arduous exertions seriously affected his health. His asthma increased to such an alarming stage that his physicians decided that the only way to save his life was to get him

into a milder climate. Cheverus, however, was determined to remain where Faith had put him, and where Faith had kept him. In fact he had gone so far, it is said, as to select his final resting place by the side of the departed Mantignon.

Some of his friends in France, however, who had become aware of his real condition, interested themselves in his behalf, though unknown to Cheverus, and at the beginning of the year 1823, the Bishop received a communication from the Prince de Croy, the Grand Almoner of France, announcing his nomination to the Bishopric of Montauban, a Huguenot stronghold in the south of the kingdom. This nomination was made at the wish of Louis XVIII. In communicating the appointment the Prince de Croy said:—"I have every reason to believe that Divine Providence has prompted this arrangement, for its own glory and for the good of the Church. His majesty, relying on your readiness to respond to the high confidence he feels in your piety, zeal, and devotion to his person, will be pleased to learn that your departure for Europe will take place immediately."

After the feeling of surprise, awakened in the mind of Cheverus upon the reception of the unexpected letter, had passed away, other conflicting emotions filled his breast. In his sick and wearied condition the first thought of returning to his home and native land, and of being once more among his early friends was extremely pleas-

ing to him ; but his second thought, of his flock in New England, the disconsolation of the priests under him at the prospect of his departure, and the Ursuline convent, which he had established for the education of young persons, made it most difficult for him to decide.

He therefore consulted the Archbishop of Baltimore and the Sulpicians at Montreal, in both of whom he had the greatest confidence, and upon receiving their unanimous opinion that it was his duty to remain in America, he immediately wrote to the Grand Almoner of France an expression of his appreciation of the honor bestowed, and the reasons for his refusal to accept it. His reasons were practically the same as those previously given to prevent his transference to the Archbishopric of Baltimore.

“ In consideration of these reasons,” he says, “ M. Maréchal was appointed in my stead ; and the church of Baltimore was a gainer by it. I pray that you will make another nomination, from which the church of Montauban will reap a similar advantage. If his Majesty will allow me, as I beseech him to do, to remain here still longer, this establishment will gain strength, and my flock and the inhabitants of Boston will bless the name of the King of France. They now see daily at my house the portrait of his Majesty, beside that of his martyred brother ; and they would fain be indebted to him for my prolonged residence here. They know that the kings of France have always been disposed to favor missions ; as has been so truly said in the ninth

chapter of the fourth book of the 'Genius of Christianity,' which I have translated, and read to them from the pulpit. May I venture to hope that his Majesty will pardon me for doing what I believe, before God, to be my duty."

With this strong appeal to be permitted to remain in Boston, there was at the same time despatched to Paris a petition signed by "more than two hundred of the principal Protestants in the city."

"We rejoice," they wrote, "that the exalted merit of Monseigneur l'Evêque Cheverus is so justly appreciated by your highness, and by his sovereign, and the evidence of his worth is found in the distinguished favor of a nomination to the Bishopric of Montauban. It is impossible for us to make known to you, by any words, how entire, grateful, and beneficent is the dominion of Bishop Cheverus over all to whom he ministers in his apostolical authority. We hold him to be a blessing and a treasure in our social community, which we cannot part with, and which, without injustice to any man, we may affirm, if withdrawn from us, can never be replaced. If the removal to the proposed diocese would be conformable to his wishes, we should mourn over this in silence. If it proceed from your own wishes, and those of his sovereign, to have this truly estimable prelate associated in the immediate Church of France, it would not become us to attempt to oppose those wishes. But if the removal can be referred to the principle of usefulness, we may safely assume that in no place, nor under any circumstances, can Bishop Cheverus be situated where his influence, whether spiritual, moral, or social, can be so extensive as where he now is."

Feeling apprehensive, however, lest the king should make demands upon him with which he must comply, he wrote to M. Hyde de Neuville, Minister of France in the United States:—

“My heart is divided, but I think myself obliged, for the good of religion and even for the honor of the French name, not to desert my post. If you had witnessed the struggles I have endured, if you had known exactly my situation and that of my diocese, you would pardon my refusal, I am sure of it. In my letter to the Grand Almoner I have stated the reasons that prompted it; and I shall not feel happy until I learn they are satisfactory.”

All these protestations and entreaties availed nothing, however, for Cheverus shortly afterwards received a letter informing him that the king would not accept his refusal, and insisting strongly upon his immediate return to France. In addition to this letter the Grand Almoner wrote Cheverus, first, that it was the express will of the king that he should return to France to take charge of Montauban; second, that the state of his health demanded it, and third, motives drawn from the situation of the clergy in France at the time. “Your great distance from us,” he said, “prevents you, doubtless, from forming an exact idea of the situation, of the diminution of our resources after such protracted troubles, and how few persons we have among us qualified to hold the higher offices. I have, moreover,

looked upon your return as a blessing of Providence, and as an alleviation vouchsafed to me amid my numerous anxieties."

Upon the reception of these urgent entreaties Cheverus again consulted with his physicians, and being advised that he could not endure another winter in the severe climate of New England, he felt that it would be unwise to remain in Boston. To reach this decision, nevertheless, cost Cheverus many pangs; it was like rending his heart in twain to leave Boston. In fact he looked upon the day of his departure as the day of his death, and so he executed what he called his "will," in which he devised to the diocese, the church, the episcopal residence, and the Ursuline convent. To the Bishops who should succeed him, he bequeathed his large library of standard works; while the remainder of his possessions were to be distributed among the ecclesiastics, his friends, and the poor. As he had come to Boston a poor man, he chose to depart poor, with no other wealth than the same trunk, which, twenty-seven years before, he had brought with him.

From all quarters, adieux, expressions of regret, and testimonials of interest poured in upon him, and inflicted upon his heart additional pangs. "Oh! my God," wrote Monseigneur Maréchal, then Archbishop of Baltimore, to him; "what will become of the American Church? Although settled at a great distance from me, you were, next to God, my greatest dependence. Will it be pos-

sible for me to govern this province of the Church after your departure?"

The journals of the day, even those of the Protestants, expressed very deep regret at his departure. "This worthy dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church," declared the *Boston Commercial Gazette*, Sept. 22, 1823, "has been with us nearly thirty years, and during this period he has enjoyed the confidence and respect of all classes of people. The amenity of his manner as a gentleman, his accomplishments as a scholar, his tolerant disposition as a religious teacher, and his pure and apostolic life, have been our theme of praise ever since we have known him. We regret his departure as a public loss."

The Catholics, as may well be supposed, were not the last nor the least fervent in their expressions of grief at the departure of their beloved Bishop. This they showed in an affectionate address, which conveyed to him their warm appreciation of his labors, and their good wishes that the mild climate of Montauban would restore and confirm his health and spirits, and enable him to continue for many years to be "a name and a praise in the Church." This address of the Catholics deeply affected Bishop Cheverus, as we may observe in the language of his response :

"Your kind address has been presented to me, and is wet with my tears. How unwilling I am to leave you, I hope you all know, and have seen how gladly I refused, last May,

the appointment which I must now accept. Excuse my faults in the exercise of my ministry; pray that they may be forgiven by the Supreme Pastor. . . . My beloved children, I press you all to my paternal bosom. I wish, and still have some hopes, to come to you again, and indulge in the comforting hope that we shall be united in the Kingdom of our Heavenly Father."

On the Sunday before his departure, the Bishop ascended the pulpit of his church, and there, to an audience as numerous as the edifice could hold, he pronounced his last adieu, and gave his last advice and blessing to his flock. He thanked his Protestant friends, many of whom were present, for the affection and kindness they had manifested towards him during his residence in Boston. Nothing could be more touching than this discourse; it is said, "a most affectionate heart had dictated every word of it, and the voice of the speaker, broken by strong emotion, gave it the most thrilling interest."

The parting day having arrived, the vestry of the church was filled at a very early hour in the morning with Protestants and Catholics, in tears. It required all the firmness the sad-hearted Bishop could command to support himself in bidding them farewell. As he left the house for the carriage, "lispering infancy and silver-haired age rushed forward to pluck his gown and share the good man's smile; and the last accents of his blessing were mingled with the moans of grief at his departure."

Some years afterward, William Ellery Channing, the great Unitarian divine, reviewing in the *Christian Examiner* the life of Fenélon, to whose character and genius those of Cheverus bear a resemblance, wrote of him in these kindly terms : —

“ Has not the metropolis of New England witnessed a sublime example of Christian fortitude in a Catholic Bishop? Who among our religious teachers would solicit a comparison between himself and the devoted Cheverus? This good man, whose virtues and talents have now raised him to high dignities in Church and State, and who now wears in his own country the joint honors of an Archbishop and a Peer, lived in the midst of us, devoting his days and nights, and his whole heart, to the service of a poor and uneducated congregation. We see him declining in a great degree the society of the cultivated and refined, that he might be the friend of the ignorant and friendless; leaving the circles of polished life, which he would have graced, for the meanest hovels; bearing with a father's sympathy the burdens and sorrows of his large spiritual family; charging himself alike with their temporal and spiritual concerns; and never discovering, by the faintest indication, that he felt his fine mind degraded by his seemingly humble office. This good man, bent on his errands of mercy, was seen on our streets under the most burning sun of summer, and the fiercest storms of winter, as if armed against the elements by the power of charity. He enjoys among us what to such a man must be dearer than fame. His name is cherished where the great of this world are unknown. It is pronounced with bless-

ings, with grateful tears, with sighs for his return, in many an abode of sorrow and want. . . . How can we shut our hearts against this proof of the power of the Catholic religion to form good and great men? . . . It is time that greater justice were done to this ancient and wide-spread community. The Catholic Church has produced some of the greatest and best men that ever lived, and this is proof enough of its possessing all the means of salvation."

Of his subsequent career in France, time will permit me to speak only in the most general way.

When he touched his native soil, thirty-one years had elapsed from the time he had left it an exile, yet so great was the reputation he had achieved, that the news of his arrival was everywhere received with expressions of delight. He went directly to Auderville, where he stayed a few days to recover from the fatigue of the voyage. He next went to Cherbourg, and after spending a day there, proceeded to Paris to pay his respects to the king. There he was received in a most flattering manner. While in Paris invitations poured in upon him from college friends, churches, religious and learned institutions, for the privilege of doing him honor and of hearing him preach. At the conclusion of his visit in Paris he set out for his native city of Mayenne. In order to avoid a reception there, he made his arrangements not to arrive until evening, but no sooner had he reached the city limits than the news of his arrival spread in every direction, and bells were rung in his

honor. Crowds of people pressed about him, with lighted torches, and uttering exclamations of joy, accompanied him to his brother's house.

The following day the clergy called in procession upon the Bishop, and conducted him, arrayed in his pontifical robes, under a canopy, to the church, in front of which they made him a complimentary address, applying to him the language of the Jewish people to Judith: "Tu honorificentia populi nostri;— You are the glory of our people." A solemn *Te Deum* was then chanted, as an expression of the gratitude for his happy return, and, after the ceremony, all the city authorities paid him their respects. In addition to these courtesies, several addresses were made to him, to all of which he replied in most felicitous words.

While he was stopping in Mayenne, preaching here and there and devoting himself with truly apostolical zeal to the labors assigned him, he received a communication recalling him to Paris.

The Bishops of America, dismayed at the immense loss which religion would sustain in America should Cheverus be permitted to remain permanently in France, had written the Holy See not to permit it. Consequently the Sovereign Pontiff had written the King of France to make another nomination for Montauban, and at the same time besought Cheverus to return to Boston. This uncertain state in which Cheverus found himself pained

him exceedingly, but affairs were soon straightened out, and the Bishop departed for Montauban.

He stopped at the different municipalities along the route of his journey, and was received with enthusiasm and demonstrations of delight and respect. On the road to Montauban he was met by the Prefect and the General of the city, and a large crowd of people; while at the entrance to the city, the clergy, the municipal corps, and the deputies of the various religious corporations were assembled under tents prepared for his reception. Having been welcomed by the Mayor in the name of the city, and by the Abbé de Frelissac, his grand vicar, in the name of the clergy, he entered Montauban, in his pontifical robes, to the sound of salutes of artillery and strains of harmonious music mingled with sacred hymns, attended by a numerous throng of clergy and laity. Reaching the door of the cathedral, he fell upon his knees to invoke divine blessing upon the church, his flock, and his official career. Then entering the church, he went into the pulpit, and exclaimed in a voice trembling with emotion : —

“What happiness I feel, my dear children in Jesus Christ, in finding myself in the midst of the beloved flock which Providence has vouchsafed to confide to my care! Your eagerness to receive me, and to testify to me your filial love, awaken in me the most grateful emotions. I perceive that your affection for me equals my love for you. You are my children, my friends; and I am your father, your most de-

voted friend. I desire henceforth to live only for you, to watch over and provide for your spiritual good, to console this diocese for its long widowhood since the loss of its first pastor, and I would gladly give my life for your happiness and salvation."

Then, pouring forth the tenderness and affection which filled his heart, he addressed the various authorities, and the whole people, in terms the most affectionate and paternal. He did not forget the Protestants either, but testified to them, on that day, the interest he felt in them.

"There is," said he, "an interesting portion of the inhabitants of the diocese, who, although strangers to our communion, ought not to be so to our affections. I wish also to be to them a father and a friend; happy should I be if one day I should be permitted to unite them all to our faith, as we ought to include them in our charity."

Such was Bishop Cheverus' entry into Montauban. From the first day he won all hearts. His refined manners, his kindness, his charity, and his inspiring speech seemed simply irresistible. The poor found in him a friend, the rich a guide; while to the sick and to the sinner his comforting words were celestial balm.

Having settled in his new field, he turned his attention to the condition of his diocese, to the affairs of religious and charitable institutions and of institutions of learning, and bent all his energies towards improving

and perfecting them. And so well and so pleasingly did he do this that it was not long before a deputy of the city of Montauban could truly say to one of the king's ministers: "There are no longer any Protestants at Montauban, we are all Bishop's people."

But while the people of Montauban were rejoicing in the possession of such a noble Bishop as the venerable Cheverus, the people of Bordeaux were afflicted by the death of their highly esteemed Archbishop, Monseigneur d'Avian du Bois de Sanzai; and when the cry went up, from Bordeaux to Paris, that the only man who could fill the vacancy was the Bishop of Montauban, the rejoicing of the people of Montauban turned to mourning.

The king was not slow in recognizing the fact, and on July 30, 1826, he signed the order which nominated Cheverus to the Metropolitan See of Bordeaux. This field furnished him with a wider sphere in which to display his usefulness and interest in the people's welfare. During the years that followed honors came to him thick and fast. Charles X especially delighted in showing him, by numerous tokens, his esteem and confidence. In 1828, His Majesty had named him Councillor of State, and authorized him to take part in the deliberations of the Council. In 1830 he added to this title one of the most honorable which the King of France could confer, namely, Commander of the Order of the Holy Ghost. In presenting it to him on behalf of the king, the Minister of the Interior wrote, in part: "The Blue

Ribbon will add nothing to your virtue and merit, but it will prove that the king is acquainted with them, and values them, and delights to honor them."

Soon afterwards came the Revolution of 1830, which swept Charles X from his seat and exalted in his stead the citizen-king of France. During those troublous times, the Archbishop of Bordeaux showed his good judgment by maintaining such tranquillity throughout his diocese that he and his ecclesiastics were enabled to enjoy as perfect peace as in more auspicious days. The new government, under Louis Philippe, was, like the preceding, very desirous of having for a friend a man of such influence and goodness as the Archbishop of Bordeaux, notwithstanding the fact that he did not conceal his affection for the dethroned monarch. The regard in which he was held by all classes made him such a desirable ally that on the 8th of June, 1835, in a discourse delivered in the Chamber of Deputies, Charles Dupin sounded the government on the wisdom of elevating Cheverus to a cardinalate. "Let the Government," he declared, "nominate the illustrious Cheverus a Cardinal; such a choice would at the same time do honor to France and to all Christendom." These words were received on every side with expressions of approbation, and the king was so much impressed with the interest exerted in Cheverus' behalf, that he too, soon after, began to regard the proposition with favor. The result was that on the 21st of December, 1835, the Pope received from the king a

communication written in his own hand, to the effect that he was convinced that the promotion of so worthy a person as the Archbishop of Bordeaux would tend to the honor of the Sacred College, and increase the splendor of the French clergy; and expressed the hope that the Holy See might so regard it. In the following February, 1836, Archbishop Cheverus was made a Prince of the Church.

He was at once summoned to Paris, to receive the title and insignia of the cardinalship. Upon his arrival, the Nuncio of his Holiness sent him the apostolical letters which made him a member of the Sacred College. In these letters we get an idea of the high regard in which Cheverus was held by the Pope.

"It is our first care," he said, "so to form the Sacred College of the Cardinals, the venerable Senate of the Universal Church and of the Apostolic See, that it may shine throughout the world, by the eminent merit of its members, as brightly as so elevated a dignity and the decrees of the holy canons require. This consideration has induced us to make you a member of this most august assembly. For your well-known piety, your learning, your prudence, your zeal for the Catholic religion, and your many virtues, united to an uncommon devotedness to our person and to the Apostolic See, your experience in business, your fidelity and ability, proved in the administration of Bordeaux, have placed you so high in our esteem that we cannot doubt your ministry will be blessed to the service and honor of the Church of God."

And in another brief, accompanying these apostolical letters, the Pope further said to him :

“Looking with paternal regard upon you, who are distinguished by Divine Goodness with such eminent gifts of grace, and considering how highly you honor the Roman Church of which you are a distinguished member, by the greatness of your merits, we deem it not only suitable, but incumbent upon us, to grant you certain privileges.”

To letters so flattering, and such distinguished marks of esteem, the new Cardinal returned the most humble and modest replies.

“We have received the letters of your Holiness,” he said to him, “with shame and confusion of face, as being conscious of our unworthiness ; but, at the same time, with a lively sense of gratitude, as a son who finds himself honored by a beloved father. . . . I experience a feeling of stupor and fear, to find myself, unworthy as I am, a member of the most illustrious College of Cardinals of the Holy Church ; but trusting in God who is my strength, I beseech Him to grant me grace to defend as I ought the rights of the Church and of the Holy See, and to contribute to its prosperity.”

But one more ceremony remained for Cheverus to go through, and that was the solemn reception of the Cardinal's hat from the hands of the king himself. This took place in Paris on Wednesday, the 9th of March, 1836. As soon as possible he returned to Bordeaux and at once took up the important duties of his high

office. Of these it is not necessary to speak. We may be certain that he met all the responsibilities which a Prince of the Church is expected to meet, with the same nobility of spirit that had characterized him through his long years as teacher, priest, Bishop, and Archbishop. Fortune had favored him all through life. Honors had come to him thick and fast, but he was never found wanting. The last honor, however, he was not to cherish long, for on the 2nd of July, 1836, only five months after he had become a Cardinal, he succumbed to the heavy strain upon him. He lingered until the 19th of that month, when he passed away, dying, as he had lived, a saint, and breathed his last while mass was being celebrated in his chamber.



BOSTON ANTI-SLAVERY DAYS

BY

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.



BOSTON ANTI-SLAVERY DAYS

A PAPER READ TO THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER,
OLD STATE HOUSE, MAY 10, 1904, BY

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.



WHEN anti-slavery days began, very different from the present was provincial Boston of which I have to tell. It had been a city only nine years when the *Liberator* was started. The fine dwellings were in Summer, Franklin, Pearl, Atkinson (now Congress), High, and Purchase streets, at present entirely swallowed up by business. Fort Hill, that lovely look-out commanding the harbor, was not in that season of decadence which preceded its occupation by the poorer classes, and led to its final and absolute removal. The North End was the home of comfort, and the spirit of the colonial houses, with their pleasant

yards and trees, betokened a less rushing life than that amidst which we live.

Beacon Hill with the State House, then as now, crowned the scene; the old Hancock House was an adornment far greater than the pretentious brown-stone dwelling that took its place. The Common was a playground where children were not warned off the grass, and sports were unconfined. Where now is Pemberton Square rose the terraced gardens of Gardiner Greene, and Charles Street was still part of the Charles River, not yet reclaimed; Hanover Street and Copp's Hill held pleasant and humble places of abode, but the South End beyond Dover Street was only the narrow neck of the peninsula. The Back Bay brought its tides undisturbed near to Washington Street, and the Public Garden had not materialized. When I was a youngster, the Garden was a dreary waste of ash-heaps and desolation, across which, in the burning sun, we walked to Morey's and Braman's bath-houses on Charles River, where Brimmer Street now is. The muddy Back Bay was sought for swimming spots in summer, and was a famous skating-ground in winter.

Boston was then a city of homes, whose business men did not rush away from town at night to sleep elsewhere. They went home to dinner at noonday, and on the Mall could be seen the famous people of the town, enjoying the charming Tremont Street of old, without a suggestion of the press of population and trade so

soon to demolish the houses and replace them with prosaic shops.

Jamaica Plain was a summer retreat for the rich merchants, although Boston in those days was itself considered a cool resort, and the fashion of migration had not seized upon the people. Brookline, Dorchester and Roxbury were ideal suburbs, whose independent inhabitants would have scouted the thought of ever being absorbed by Boston.

Omnibuses ran hourly from Brattle Street to Cambridge, and from the Old South Church to the Town Hall in Roxbury. Water was supplied from Jamaica Pond through pipes made of logs, and the sparse city lamps were lighted with whale-oil. The population was essentially American, for the foreigners, chiefly Irish, so necessary an element of the city's growth in performing the rough labor, were a small fraction, living on Broad and Sea streets and spreading later to the South Cove, when that unhealthy addition to Boston was made.

The town had grown by commerce and was the home of great merchants, their ships covering the globe, and their merchandise coming from its four quarters. But at the time of my story, the tariff was turning capital from foreign trade to manufactures, building up the great centres of cotton industry at Lowell and Lawrence, and bringing manufacturers and their commission houses into close relationship with the South. Thence came the cotton, and in exchange the State found cus-

tomers for its coarse cotton goods, shoes, and whips for the slave plantations. The whips were mostly made in Westfield.

Slavery, although mildly deprecated and regretted on ethical grounds, was considered a thing for which Providence was responsible, and was accepted as part of the body politic. The compromises of the Constitution had recognized and accepted it, and it was the duty of good citizens to be loyal to the compact of the Fathers, and to the Union based upon the agreement.

The churches had no protests against the wicked institution; law was upon its side; trade profited by it, jealous of any disturbance, and society welcomed the visiting lords of the South. It was into this accepted condition of things that a young man from Newburyport, then in his twenty-fifth year, suddenly appeared, announcing his determination to oppose these seemingly overwhelming forces, and neither to pause nor rest until the institution of chattel-slavery in the United States was overthrown.

The defiance was too preposterous to attract serious attention. It was known that the imprudent youth had recently been imprisoned in Baltimore jail for alleged libel in his newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, of a respectable citizen of Newburyport. Apparently libel could be construed out of a truthful denunciation of one engaged in the inter-State slave trade.



WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.
1805 — 1879.

Unable thereafter to continue in Baltimore, William Lloyd Garrison had come to Boston to resume his suspended work of abolishing American slavery. Renting an attic room in Merchants' Hall, on the corner of Congress and Water streets, he associated himself with Isaac Knapp, a Newburyport friend, and began the publication of *The Liberator*, January 1st, 1831. The old building was destroyed in the great Boston fire of 1872. The Howe building, in which the Shawmut National Bank now has its rooms, covers the ground. The two young men, with no money, but much faith, subsisted on bread and milk and slept on the floor of the office. Lowell, in his poem "To W. L. Garrison," has described the situation : —

In a small chamber, friendless and unseen,
Toiled o'er his types one poor, unlearned young man ;
The place was dark, unfurnished, and mean,
Yet there the freedom of a race began.

The South was startled by the audacious little paper before Boston took cognizance of it. On an appeal from the *Washington Intelligencer* for its suppression, Mayor Harrison Gray Otis replied soothingly that the city officers "had ferreted out the paper and its editor ; that his office was an obscure hole, his only visible auxiliary a negro boy, and his supporters a very few insignificant persons of all colors." In spite of this assurance, the Legislature of Georgia on the 30th of

November, 1831, with the approval of the Governor, offered a reward of five thousand dollars for Garrison's arrest and prosecution. You will to-day read upon the pedestal of his statue on Commonwealth Avenue the words quoted from the first editorial of the *Liberator*, which gave such fright to the slave States: "I am in earnest — I will not equivocate — I will not excuse — I will not retreat a single inch — *and I will be heard.*"

The colored people and many white friends rallied to Garrison's aid, and in January, 1832, the New England Anti-Slavery Society was organized in the school-room of the African Baptist Church, on Belknap, now Joy Street, on the north side of Beacon Hill, then chiefly occupied by the colored people. The agitation then grew more aggressive. The merchants and manufacturers, whose fear of trade disturbance made them actively hostile, and the outcries of Southern papers for the suppression of the *Liberator*, magnified the numbers and power of the Abolitionists.

In 1833 Mr. Garrison went on a mission to England, seeking aid for the cause. There he enlisted the services of that eloquent English orator, George Thompson, who came to the United States a year later to take part in the agitation. Thompson was a noble and fearless man, actuated by no selfish motives, and ready to risk his fortune and life beside the hunted Abolitionists. On Wednesday, October 21st, 1835, he was advertised to speak at a meeting of the Boston Female Anti-slavery

Society, to be held at the Anti-slavery rooms, 46 Washington Street,—the only available place, other halls having been refused by the proprietors because of apprehended violence.

The papers had been denunciatory of the “foreign scoundrel,” as they called this generous philanthropist, threatening him with personal injury if he dared to appear at the meeting announced. He had previously experienced the nature of a mob. On August 5th, while addressing a convention in Lynn, a stone meant for him was thrown through a window, striking a lady in the audience. The following evening he lectured again, and was mobbed by three hundred disturbers, escaping with difficulty. On September 4th, he was attacked at Concord, New Hampshire. On the 17th, a gallows was set up before the house in Brighton Street, Boston, where he was a guest of Mr. Garrison, and on the 27th of the same month an onslaught was made upon him at Abington. The public mind was greatly excited; the newspapers added fuel to the flames, and on the morning of October 21st, the following hand-bill was posted about the city:—

THOMPSON

THE ABOLITIONIST

That infamous foreign scoundrel, THOMPSON, will hold forth this afternoon, at the Liberator Office, No. 48 Washington Street. The present is a fair opportunity for the friends

of the Union to snake Thompson out! It will be a contest between the Abolitionists and the friends of the Union. A purse of \$100 has been raised by a number of patriotic citizens to reward the individual who shall first lay violent hands on Thompson, so that he may be brought to the tar kettle before dark. Friends of the Union, be vigilant!

Boston, Wednesday, 12 o'clock.

Mr. Thompson's friends wisely kept him away from the meeting, but the mob assembled in anticipation, ready for the brutal work. It was not composed of rough and ignorant men, but comprised the leading citizens of Boston. There were rich merchants, and lawyers, and people who moved in the best society. The daily papers boasted that it was a "broadcloth mob," led by "gentlemen of property and standing." Disappointed in missing Thompson, they seized Garrison, who, with a rope around his body, bare-headed, with torn clothes, was hustled through Wilson's Lane* to State Street. It was planned to take him to the Common and the Frog Pond, for a coat of tar and feathers, when he was rescued by the police under Mayor Lyman, and sheltered in the second story of this Old State House, then the City Hall, in the very room in which I am now speaking. From there he was driven to Leverett Street Jail for safety. The prisoner, calm

* Wilson's Lane is now the continuation of Devonshire Street, from State Street to Dock Square.

and serene amid the tumult, accepted the situation, and after a visit from several friends who conversed with him through his grated window, — Whittier and Mr. and Mrs. Alcott being among the number, — he threw himself upon his prison bed and slept the sleep of the just.

The old jail was torn down in 1852. Just before its demolition, it was thrown open to the public as an object of curiosity. Master Philbrick, of the Quincy School, took a number of pupils, of whom I was one, to see the place of so much notoriety. The cell which Mr. Garrison occupied, with its stone floor and walls, its heavy grating, and iron bed fixed to the wall, attracted especial interest.

Mr. Garrison was brought before a justice the next morning and dismissed, no charge being preferred against him. But the impetus given to the anti-slavery movement by this outrage it is impossible to estimate. Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner, then not long out of college, were both witnesses of the mob and soon became converts to the cause. There are still living eye-witnesses to the riot; among them, the venerable Joseph K. Hayes, in whose carpenter-shop Mr. Garrison was sheltered. In 1854, he was Captain of the Watch and Police of Boston, but, loyal to his hatred of slavery, threw up his commission rather than take part in the return of the fugitive slave, Anthony Burns, the fiftieth anniversary of whose rendition to slavery

occurs this month. Mr. Hayes has lived to see the marvelous revolution, and deserves an honorable remembrance for his devotion to freedom. Afterward he was custodian of Tremont Temple, and to him Sumner applied the Scripture text: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

The next event brings us to Hollis Street, to the house of Francis Jackson, still standing, and at present numbered 31. The surroundings have changed vastly; the fine old garden long since gave way to solid dwellings, and the neighboring trees and open spaces have disappeared under bricks and mortar. But the exterior of the house is the same as on the afternoon of November 18, 1835, when Harriet Martineau, the great English authoress, was making her first anti-slavery address in the front parlor.

Small as was that gathering, it was a memorable and momentous occasion. It was a meeting of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, and Francis Jackson, fully prepared to have his house injured or demolished, had offered it in the name of free speech, saying that it would have little value to him after its owner should have been whipped into silence. Miss Martineau had just returned from a visit to the South, where she had been the guest of slave-holders,—among them, Henry Clay. In Boston she was received and entertained by polite society, which feared and despised the

Abolitionists. Nevertheless, she determined to see and hear these dreadful people for herself on that November afternoon, speaking a few simple words of sympathy which were forever to cut her off from former friends and associations, and to bind her in bonds of closest alliance with the Abolitionists. It was an exchange which gave her exceeding joy and satisfaction for the remainder of her life.

In Faneuil Hall, December 8, 1837, a great meeting, called by Dr. William Ellery Channing and other eminent citizens of Boston not identified with the Abolitionists, assembled to protest against the brutal murder of Elijah P. Lovejoy, the anti-slavery editor of Alton, Illinois, whose printing office was mobbed and burned, himself shot, and his press thrown into the Ohio river. The moral sentiment of the country was aroused, and in response to the call, Faneuil Hall was thronged. The speeches were dignified and weighty, until Attorney-General Austin arose to denounce Lovejoy, comparing the mob to the Revolutionary heroes, and declaring of the martyr that "he died as the fool dieth." The indignation and excitement over this defence of law-breaking and murder was at white heat, when a young man, unknown to the public, mounted the platform and asked to be heard. It was Wendell Phillips, a graduate of Harvard College, just beginning the practice of law. He was a son of John Phillips, the first Mayor of the city, and was born on the lower corner of Beacon and

Walnut streets, in the old mansion now occupied by the Misses Mason. He had just completed his twenty-sixth year, was full of youthful beauty and vigor, possessing a charm of voice and manner that was in after-years to hold audiences spell-bound, and place him among the greatest of American orators.

With characteristic calm, attracting at once the interest and attention of the audience, Phillips began his answer to the remarks of the Attorney-General. I will quote only the climax of his memorable speech: "Sir, when I heard the gentleman lay down principles which place the rioters, incendiaries, and murderers of Mount Benedict and Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips [pointing to portraits in the hall] would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American — the slanderer of the dead. . . . Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of the Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up!" From that day until slavery was abolished, Wendell Phillips shared with Garrison the leadership of the anti-slavery movement.

With few signal exceptions, the Abolitionists were of humble origin and association. Denied by circumstances the privileges of learning, in the academic sense, with no social distinction, misrepresented and traduced on all sides, it was indeed a joy when men of scholar-

ship and social standing entered their ranks. Edmund Quincy, the son of the great President of Harvard College and second Mayor of Boston, like Wendell Phillips, turned his back upon society and enrolled himself also in the unpopular struggle. Whatever ambitions, social or political, these young men had cherished, they gladly surrendered for the slave's cause. Lydia Maria Child and Maria Weston Chapman—the first a young and favorite authoress, the second a woman of great beauty and distinction, endowed with statesman-like qualities—devoted themselves to the despised cause. Mrs. Chapman's house, then 11 West Street, was the headquarters of social anti-slavery. Phillips, Garrison, Quincy, Dr. Charles Follen, the noble German professor of Harvard College, Eliza Lee Follen, his beautiful wife, Ellis Gray Loring, a Boston lawyer of delightful memory, Samuel E. Sewall, Samuel J. May, and many other kindred souls, formed the circle that gathered there. Quincy once wrote to a correspondent abroad that when he grew tired of the life of his own set, he found true rest and companionship in the parlors of Mrs. Chapman. Here also her younger sisters, the Westons, lent their wit and bright intelligence.

The ferment of the abolition agitation increased. All over the country the mob spirit was rampant, and the anger of the South grew apace. The poets Whittier and Lowell gave their pens to the cause, and Pierpont gave both pen and voice. Outside of Boston, in the

country towns and districts of Massachusetts, as well as in other States, the anti-slavery lecturers, men and women, preached the gospel of immediate emancipation, and were met with mobs and treatment often worse than physical violence. Abby Kelley, Stephen S. Foster, and Parker Pillsbury suffered the greatest hardships, and were true apostles in the wilderness of pro-slavery hate.

The first fugitive slave case in Boston, October, 1842, was that of George Latimer, a fine-looking man, almost white, who had escaped with his wife and child from Norfolk, Virginia. He was arrested on the false charge of theft and confined in Leverett Street jail. A public meeting was called in Faneuil Hall. The audience was turbulent, and Remond, a colored speaker, was howled down. Wendell Phillips said indignantly: "We presume that the Bible outweighs the statute book. When I look upon these crowded thousands, and see them trample on their consciences and the rights of their fellow-men at the bidding of a piece of parchment, I say, my curse be on the Constitution of the United States."

You can imagine the effect of such words when the Constitution was worshipped as something sacred. Yet it was under its compromises that the North was obliged to return fugitive slaves. Latimer was later ransomed. He lived to be over eighty, and died only a few years ago. Samuel E. Sewall defended him, and Whittier

wrote his stirring poem, "Massachusetts to Virginia," on that occasion. Here are two of its stanzas :

We hunt your bondmen, flying from Slavery's hateful hell ;
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the blood-hound's yell ;
We gather, at your summons, above our fathers' graves,
From Freedom's holy altar-horns to tear your wretched slaves !

Thank God ! not yet so vilely can Massachusetts bow ;
The spirit of her early time is with her even now ;
Dream not because her Pilgrim blood moves slow and calm and
cool,
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a sister's slave and tool !

There were not many places in Boston where anti-slavery meetings could be held, the owners of halls being naturally afraid of tenants who so often provoked injury to their property. Of course, if the city authorities did not protect citizens in their right to free speech, the city was responsible for the damage done ; but unless the owners were friendly to abolition—a rare thing—they liked the excuse of danger for refusing it a hearing.

One of the few places open was Marlboro Chapel. It stood on the site of the building now numbered 395 Washington Street, nearly opposite Franklin, and was approached through an archway. It was back from the street and was originally a stable, the upper part of which was once used for an anti-slavery meeting, when no hall could be secured. An abolition gathering was a precarious one as regarded numbers, often discourag-

ingly small, but occasionally, in an exciting time, crowded to the hall's capacity.

As in all new reforms, many strange and eccentric people were attracted to it, especially those who liked to talk in public and seized the opportunity where free speech was a cardinal principle. Bores were tolerated with Christian forbearance, and only where the speakers were demented did the long-suffering chairman venture to suppress them. Emerson called these disturbers the "fleas of the convention," and three especially were memorable,—all worthy and excellent people.

Abby Folsom was a woman of large heart and benevolence, without means herself, but ready to help others with her good services. But there was "a screw loose," as the saying is, in her mental equipment, and in season and out of season she rose to speak when a pause occurred. Father Lamson, a picturesque lunatic, was garbed in white from hat to shoes, and wore a long white beard. He supplemented Abby Folsom, often joining with her to defeat the ruling of the chairman. The only alternative was to remove them forcibly when patience was exhausted. I remember in Marlboro Chapel seeing Phillips and Quincy carrying Abby bodily from the hall, and depositing her gently but firmly on the floor in the entry. Neither she nor Lamson ever resisted violently, but made themselves as heavy as possible, and uttered sarcastic and cutting remarks to their bearers. The third "flea" was a younger man, George

W. F. Mellen, who gained the newspaper soubriquets of "Alphabet" and "Habeas-corpus" Mellen. He had a conviction that slavery could be abolished by means of the habeas corpus act, and never missed an opportunity of rising to present his panacea.

Of course these unbalanced people were a delight to the pro-slavery listeners, who "egged" them on with applause, and would privately encourage them to interrupt. They were falsely represented in the press as typical Abolitionists, who were also popularly considered to be a crazy set. But if the convention had its bores, it had its unrivalled orators, and Emerson attested that in anti-slavery meetings "eloquence was dog-cheap." The platform was a forum where questions of the highest moment and loftiest nature were treated by lips worthy of such discourse. No school of oratory compared with an Abolition convention.

It was impossible for the children of an Abolitionist not to be aware of the opinion in which their father was held by the neighbors. Few doors opened to them, and the boy playmates freely expressed the general sentiment of their families upon Abolition and Abolitionists. But the tradesmen were always friendly, having the sense to perceive that their bills were promptly paid, and their customer was a most conscientious one. How the money did materialize at the right times was always a mystery to the mother of the family, for the *Liberator* never paid its expenses, and the few lectures

which brought pecuniary recompense were very far apart. Yet kind and loyal hands held up the reformer and enabled him to do his chosen work.

Wendell Phillips lived at 26 Essex Street, afterwards numbered 50, opposite Harrison Avenue, residing there for forty-one years. It was a small house, furnished with plainness and simplicity, and, as Mrs. Phillips was a life-long invalid, was of necessity closed to entertainment. A narrow staircase brought the visitor up to the front parlor, at once the reception-room and study of the orator. The house has been replaced by a large store, now marked by a tablet. It was a sad blow to Mr. Phillips when the widening of Harrison Avenue compelled the taking of his house, and he retired reluctantly to 37 Common Street, from which he was buried in 1884. His affections clung to the old spot.

Theodore Parker came to Boston from West Roxbury in 1845, to preach in the old Melodeon, a hall on the site of the present Bijou Theatre, next to Keith's. After Marlboro Chapel passed into possession of the Lowell Institute, the anti-slavery conventions were most frequently held at the Melodeon, a central and quiet place. Mr. Parker lived in Exeter Place, leading off Chauncy Street, then a retired and charming neighborhood. From their respective back windows Mr. Parker and Mr. Phillips could look across to each other and exchange signals. The house was demolished to give place to the encroaching stores.

Let me pass now to the exciting days following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, when Shadrach was arrested in February, 1851. While the negro was confined in the Court House, waiting for trial before a Commissioner, he was rescued forcibly by a crowd of colored people, assisted by white friends, and spirited away. Phillips wrote of it to a friend: "In Boston all is activity—never before so much since I knew the cause. The rescue of Shadrach has set the whole public afire! We have hundreds of fugitives among us. The oldest are alarmed. I had an old woman of seventy ask my advice about flying, although originally free, and fearful only of being caught by mistake. . . . Our Vigilance Committee meets every night. The escapes have been providential. Since Shadrach's case, nigh a hundred have left the city."

The rescue of Shadrach created an intense excitement throughout the country. President Fillmore issued a special proclamation, and Henry Clay, then near the close of his life, arose in the Senate to consider the expediency of a law making it a crime to denounce the Fugitive Slave Law. The same pro-slavery spirit manifested itself in Boston. The elder Quincy wrote to Richard H. Dana, Jr.:

"When the law passed, I did think the moral sense of the community would not enforce it. . . . But now I find that my fellow-citizens are not only submissive to, but that they are earnestly active for, its enforcement. The

Boston of 1851 is not the Boston of 1775. Boston has now become a mere shop — a place for buying and selling goods ; I suppose, also, *for buying and selling men.*”

Atonement to the South must be made, and on the third of April Thomas Sims, a fugitive slave from Georgia, was arrested and adjudged the property of the claimant. At five o'clock in the morning, three hundred policemen, disposed in hollow square, escorted the prisoner to a vessel which carried him back to Savannah and bondage. No resistance was offered, and the militia were under arms in Faneuil Hall, ready in case of need. Phillips spoke upon the Common, and Parker in Tremont Temple, in protest against the outrage, but public sentiment was with the slave-hunters.

The return of one more victim was yet to disgrace the city of the Pilgrims. On May 24th, 1854, fifty years ago this month, Anthony Burns, a fugitive from Virginia, was arrested on the false charge of theft and manacled. A strong defence was made by his volunteer counsel, Richard H. Dana, Jr., and Charles M. Ellis, but without avail. An immense meeting was convened at Faneuil Hall on the evening of the 26th, which was addressed by Wendell Phillips, Theodore Parker, and others. The intensity of feeling was thrilling. I never shall forget the resentful exclamations of the audience when Theodore Parker began his speech with “Fellow-citizens of Virginia !” From all parts of the hall came the indignant response, “No ! no ! Take that back !”

which the speaker promised to do when they showed themselves worthy to be called citizens of Massachusetts. The meeting came to a sudden ending by the announcement that the Court House was attacked, and the audience rushed to Court Square with the intent of joining in a rescue. The attack was led gallantly by Thomas Wentworth Higginson, then a young Unitarian minister of Worcester, and other Abolitionists. Although one of the United States Marshal's men was killed, the assault was repulsed.

Every one who witnessed the rendition of Anthony Burns on that beautiful day in early June felt conscious that he was present at an historic scene. Boston was in the hands of the militia, but windows along the line were draped, and cries of "Shame!" came up from many throats. The entire police force, twenty-two companies of Massachusetts soldiers, a platoon of United States marines from the Charlestown Navy-yard, and the Marshal's sworn posse, were deemed necessary to guard and escort this helpless colored man from the Court House to Long Wharf.

As described by Rev. Samuel May, Jr. :

First came a body of troops with drawn swords; then a large force of police, and marines with drawn swords, surrounding a hollow square of the same, in the midst of which walked Burns, with a face calm and manly though very serious. Next came artillerymen with a large brass field-piece, loaded to the muzzle, and ready to be discharged if

needed. Then came a force of infantry. And ever and anon, as the people rushed in behind and on all sides with groans and hisses and many with cheers, companies of mounted horsemen would rush down the streets, dividing them for the time.

All this time the country was unconsciously drifting toward the Niagara of civil war. The passage of the Nebraska bill, the election of Buchanan for President in 1856 over Fremont, and in 1859 the attack on Harper's Ferry by John Brown, were only indications of the catastrophe ahead, which was as yet undiscernible to the wisest. The lines between the North and South were suffering the tension which precedes a break. Mobs and riots were again in fashion.

Theodore Parker, with the hand of death upon him, was now abroad seeking restoration, but destined to find, instead, a grave under Italian skies, in the Florence cemetery where Mrs. Browning lies fitly buried. Music Hall missed his weekly lesson, and Freedom mourned the loss of the faithful voice. Wendell Phillips often supplied the vacant pulpit, and on the 16th of December, 1860, after a discourse on "Mobs and Education," taking for his text the recent breaking up of the John Brown meeting at Tremont Temple by a most respectable mob led by a Boston merchant, was himself assaulted as he emerged from Music Hall in the passage to Winter Street. Fortunately he had a strong volunteer body-guard which escorted him in safety to his home,

around which the disappointed mob howled and groaned.

Then followed, shortly, the contrast of a lifetime. The election of Abraham Lincoln in the autumn of 1860, succeeded by the firing on Fort Sumter in April, 1861, developed a new North. The very men who had mobbed Phillips two years before now joined the ranks of Massachusetts soldiers, raised under the orders of the great anti-slavery Governor, John A. Andrew, and marched down State Street singing the John Brown song, on their way to attack and destroy the sacred institution of American slavery.

The fires of oppression were not yet wholly extinguished in Boston. Bitter feelings are slow in dying out. As late as July, 1863, more than six months after President Lincoln had freed the slaves by his famous Proclamation, and after the surrender of Vicksburg and the victory at Gettysburg, fierce riots took place in Detroit, New York, and Boston. In New York many colored people were killed or beaten, and the houses of their friends were attacked and injured. Mr. Garrison's house in Dix Place was threatened, and it was considered prudent for the family to remove from the city temporarily. Fortunately the authorities were able to quell the uprising, and the last violent pro-slavery demonstration in the city ended then.

The great struggle of freedom, however, did not cease when the negro was emancipated, but goes on in every generation, a never-ending conflict. To each the ques-

tion comes up in a new form, and the chief value of history is to make clear the guiding principles which alone are safe and profitable. If the solid men of Boston who stood in high places fifty years ago were to revisit the city, how great would be their astonishment to read the despised names of Garrison, Phillips, Parker, Andrew, Sumner, and Wilson upon the sides of the Public Library, and to see their portraits and statues treasured among those of the benefactors of Boston and mankind!



THE ISLANDS IN BOSTON HARBOR

BY

MRS. JULIA KNOWLTON DYER.



THE ISLANDS OF BOSTON HARBOR.

A PAPER* READ TO THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER,
OLD STATE HOUSE, NOVEMBER 8, 1904, BY

MRS. JULIA KNOWLTON DYER.



It is not known who first discovered Boston harbor, but Greenland was found by Eric the Red, a Dane, in the year 986, and in 1002 he and his son, Lief Ericson, with Biorne, an Iclander, sailed from Greenland on a voyage of discovery which extended as far south as New Jersey; they are supposed to have been in New England, and may have anchored in Boston harbor. Wiser heads than that of your essayist have accepted this possibility as true history. So this is why we have crected the likeness of the young discoverer,

* In the preparation of this paper, the Compiler has freely quoted from King's excellent Handbook on Boston Harbor, and other authorities.

in enduring bronze, and placed it in our fairest avenue, where peering through the mists of mystery he searches for the great land which his faith pictured, and which it has taken Time less than a decade of centuries to reveal and develop. It sends a thrill like listening to the old Sagas, as we look at the youthful figure in its graceful poise, and the most practical among us feels his imagination kindle as he thinks of possible homes by the Charles that may have been realities! Why he came into our history at all, why we have such a vanishing glimpse of him, we do not know; but as the uncovering of abandoned and buried cities in the East shows us how, thousands of years ago, people lived in them and read and wrote, loved and died, so we may feel justified in believing that to some future generation shall be told our country's story, now folded away for safe keeping, until the lesson shall be needed.

Lief Ericson was succeeded by his brother Thorwald, who, in 1004, seems to have discovered Cape Cod and a wooded promontory which archaeologists believe may have been Point Allerton, one of the headlands of Boston harbor. He tried to establish colonies, but was repulsed by the savages; and finally disheartened, all the explorations were given up, and even Greenland was for centuries only known to the Norwegians and Danes as the "Lost Land," and their early voyages were only traditionary. Yet there are authentic maps made at

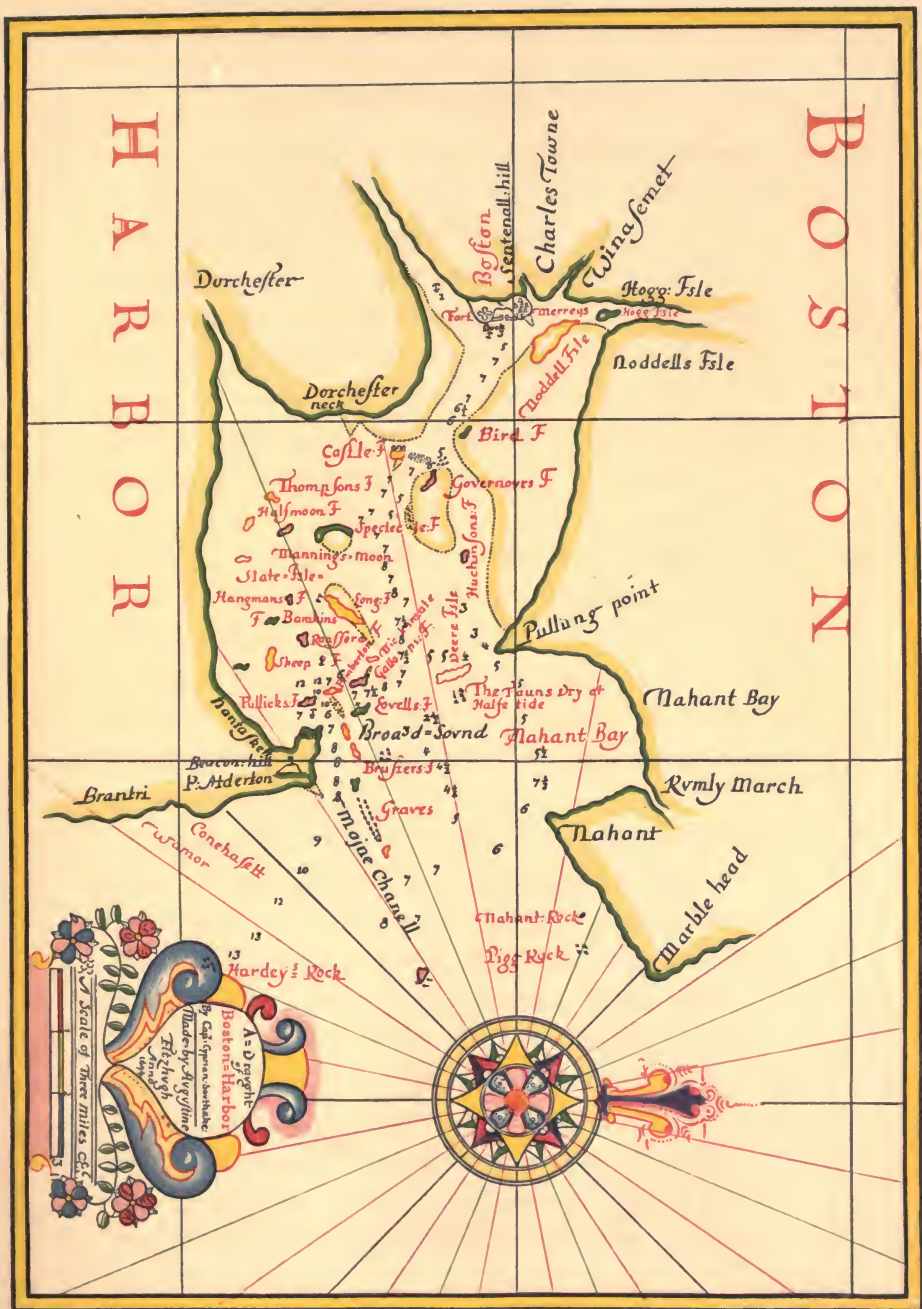
that time, and still in existence in European museums, which furnish undeniable proof that this country was discovered five hundred years before Christopher Columbus even lived. We feel we have reason to believe that long before "the world-seeking Genoese" found these western shores, and still longer before our Pilgrim Fathers came, the waters of Boston harbor had been sailed over, and its many beautiful islands had taxed the power of some Scandinavian's arithmetic as he bewilderedly strove to enumerate them!

If anyone here is tired of the frivolities and emptiness of social life which make such demands upon us; if he or she is weary of lectures, and instructions in parliamentary law, socialism, brain-culture, and all the multitudinous impedimenta of the world of to-day; if, I say, in the rush and tear of all these he is weary,—body, mind and soul,—let him drop them all and lose himself among the maps of Boston harbor, as drawn by "ancient mariners" when glasses were unknown. They claim to have served as charts to enterprising and venturesome seamen, from the days of the Norsemen to the coming of our Pilgrim Fathers. Let him search them through carefully and critically, and the bewilderment is so complete that if he comes out of it all without being an absolute mental wreck, he will find the *'ologies* and *'isms* a mind-relief beyond expression.

For instance: the site of Boston seems to have been a peripatetic locality, for it was sometimes on the coast

of Maine, sometimes in Labrador, and sometimes in Virginia. As late as 1612 a most vivid picture, or rather pictorial chart, of Massachusetts Bay illustrates its peculiarities by two ships under full sail, nearly side by side, their canvas bellying out in exactly opposite directions, while the blue hills of Milton, with truly Alpine steepness, ranged in a soldier-like line close on the shore, seem to be watching an enormous codfish waving his tail in the air and skipping over the billows, with his mouth open to an extent that makes it possible to engulf both vessels. What terror this monster must have brought to the helpless sailors! If that be a fair representation of the prehistoric codfish, no wonder that when our fathers discovered him, they hung his effigy in their most honored public building, as if to placate him, and wrote under it the earnest prayer of the trembling colonists: "God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!"

How the early explorers found anything on these maps to guide them I cannot imagine, and I do not believe they did. The only thing they knew was, that by sailing west they came to land which they thought to be a part of Asia, until the adventurous Portuguese proved there was still another ocean beyond; so they sailed west, viewed a part of our coast, and went home to tell their marvelous stories, and while resting drew the maps of their voyages,—a strange commingling of billowy memories and imaginings.



FITZHUGH'S COPY, 1694, OF
CAPT. CYPRIAN SOUTHAKE'S MAP OF BOSTON HARBOR, 1689.

In 1602 (we are comforted by being told), Gosnold, an English navigator, the first who stretched his course direct from England to New England instead of by the round-about way of the Azores and the West Indies, landed in Salem, and, striking across to the opposite cape, was so surprised at a very large catch of fish that he gave the name of Cape Cod to the headland. He and his men are the first English positively known to have landed on Massachusetts soil. He appears to have been above his fellow-voyagers in good sense, for he struck out a straight way to the object he sought,—*and he made no map!* And yet he seems to lead us out of the mists into real history. Others, before and after him, gave many names to the southern arm of our bay, but they all failed to be permanent, and it still bears the appropriate name with which Gosnold christened it three centuries ago.

I must tell you of one more map, and then I will leave you to search out the rest for yourselves. "The thrice memorable Discoverer," as he is called, Captain John Smith, took up the problem. He too came straight across. He sailed for Virginia, and struck the coast near the Penobscot! He left his vessels there to fish and trade, and taking eight men in an open boat, started to explore and map out the bay. He says himself that he passed "close aboard the shore, drawing the map from point to point, isle to isle, and harbor to harbor, with the soundings, sands, rocks and land-

marks," and that he sounded about twenty-five excellent harbors.

We all like a little romance, so it will please you to know that he named Cape Ann, Cape Tragabigzanda, after "an old Turkish flame of his." In reality she was a maiden who had contrived to set him free when he was a slave among the Turks. Subsequently, when Prince Charles wished it called Cape Ann, he sacrificed his sentiment to his loyal desire to please his Prince. He seems to have mistaken the entrance to the harbor by Point Allerton for the mouth of a river, and speaking of it as "the fairest reach in this bay," he called it the Charles River. Smith's map is worthy of notice because it was the beginning of any reliable New England cartography.

It may be interesting to note that in searching among these maps, one finds that about the time of Captain Smith's voyages, when maps and men were not so misty and were more reliable, there was a passage through the elbow of Cape Cod, and Captain Southake says he came through it in a whale-boat, when ordered by the Government to look after the pirate ship of Captain Bellamy, which had been cast away in April, 1717. Nature seems to object to a waterway through this noted cape, and keeps her emissaries, the winds and waves, busy in filling in the rents that sometimes occur. It is a question whether she will be more kind to the work of man, when she herself has closed the way that once she

opened, as if satisfied that the experiment was one of questionable utility.

It was in 1621 that Miles Standish sailed out of Plymouth in an open boat, with nine other Europeans and three savages. They came past Point Allerton, seeking "the bottom of the bay," or, as we say now, the head of the harbor, and anchored off Thompson's Island. In the morning they explored the island and visited Squantum, or Squaw Rock, whose semblance of a rocky face gazes steadfastly over at the green shores of Thompson's Island. They came to form an alliance of friendly trade with the Indians, and explore the bay and harbor. They accomplished both tasks, and said when they gave their report, "We cannot help wishing that we were there seated." This is the first recorded exploration of Boston harbor. But undoubtedly, long before Standish's visit, the harbor was well known to the traders and fishermen of many nations. Smith, in 1614, speaks of a French ship that had shortly preceded him, and two years later the savages surprised and murdered all the crew of a French ship lying off Pattock's Island, burning the vessel after plundering it. Years afterwards, pieces of French money, which were probably stolen from the victims, were dug up in Dorchester.

We spoke of Thompson's Island. David Tomson,* a Scotchman — a gentleman and a scholar — moved there

* The name is variously spelled.

in 1626. In 1628 he died, and the island was granted to his son, and has borne the family name ever since. A few years later John Thompson returned to England and leased his island to two Bristol merchants, who traded in the harbor for fish and furs. In 1634 Massachusetts granted the island to Dorchester, which leased it for twenty pounds a year, this income to be used to pay a schoolmaster for the town. This has been claimed by some to be the first money ever raised by taxes for a free public school anywhere in the world. In 1648 David Thompson's son John claimed his birthright, and having fully proved it, the General Court restored it to him.

For one hundred and fifty years the island was devoted to farming. In 1775 American foragers burned the houses there; presumably they held stores for the British, who were then besieged in Boston. In 1834 the Boston Farm School Association purchased the island and it was annexed to Boston, but the right was granted to the people of Dorchester to dig clams there. Here was eventually established the "Farm School," where boys are thoroughly taught in agriculture. It is not a reformatory institution in any sense, but a school where boys are taught farming, that they may become respectable, industrious and self-supporting men. I have not found just how long after the purchase of the island by the Farm School Association the school was opened, but sixty years ago I used to hear my father speak of a

Mr. Morrison, a friend of his, who was then at the head of the school.

There is another account of the island which gives it a more varied history. It appears from this that previous to coming thither in 1626, David Thompson first settled at Little Harbor, on the Piscataqua. Three years after the General Court had acknowledged the claim of John Thompson to the island, that is, in 1651, it was seized for debt by Hugh Brown and Joseph Johnson; it was valued at that time at £150. They sold it the next year to Francis Norton and Nicholas Davison for £218: 7s.: 6d. Afterwards it became the property of John Paine, who conveyed it to Simon Lynde, on August 31, 1666, for the sum of £312: 7s. It was given by Simon Lynde during his lifetime to his fifth son, Benjamin Lynde, and remained the property of his descendants for more than one hundred years. How fortunate for those of us who seek to learn our history that, unlike English students, we are not obliged to search the long record of many centuries; for how could we find the true story, when in less than three hundred years accounts get so confused!

One more incident relating to Thompson's Island must be mentioned. Scarcity of powder within the American lines, during the siege of Boston, caused great anxiety and often prevented any efficient action for our benefit. The British were very suspicious and very watchful. A few country people were allowed to pass

into town with provisions, after a search at the British posts. Market wagons were but little used; farmers, riding on horseback, brought what provisions they could carry in panniers. George Minot, of Dorchester, became well known from the frequency of his visits, and eventually was allowed to pass without examination. Then he carried powder furnished by his father, John Minot, of Dorchester. Afterwards the Government acknowledged and paid its indebtedness; and with the money thus received a part of Thompson's Island was purchased.

 The nearest island to Thompson's is Spectacle Island, so called because in form it resembles in a remarkable degree a pair of those useful articles. It is formed by two peninsulas connected by a short bar which is completely covered at high tide. In early days it was bought by Samuel Bill from a chief of the Massachusetts Indians. Thirty-three years later, Mr. Bill sold it to the town of Boston. A hospital was built here, which was afterwards transferred to Rainsford Island. In 1728 the last duel was fought on Boston Common, and young Woodbridge was killed. Many of us, as we pass along Tremont Street, have paused for a moment by the Granary Burying-ground, and paid a thoughtful tribute to his memory as we read over the inscription on his tombstone so near the iron fence, and mused on the cruelty of his taking off and he so young — only a boy of eighteen years. His opponent's life was saved from

the gallows by his being received on board H. M. S. Sheerness, which lay off Spectacle Island. She sailed at dawn the next morning, and the outraged Puritan law was never satisfied. The island was covered with a thick growth of trees, which sheltered several bears which swam over from the mainland. The trees were cut down, and in the "eighteen-forties" Spectacle Island was a famous place of resort for grave citizens, who discussed serious political events and prospects as they ate their appetizing fish dinners,—notably the election of General Taylor as President of the United States, and the annexation of California. The island was subsequently bought by Mr. Nahum Ward, who located there an immense rendering establishment. Stark says: "The island has been put to a new business, which speaks for itself if one happens to the leeward of it!"—and he quietly remarks: "It has ceased to be a place of resort." It might be interesting to add that in 1742 the hay made was hauled to South Boston on the ice.

Noddle's Island, or, as it is now called, the Island Ward of Boston, was first settled by William Noddle in 1629, before Boston was founded. He was a bachelor, and his name is extinct except as perpetuated by the island's name, which one still hears spoken occasionally among Bostonians. The first conspicuous settler was Samuel Maverick, gentleman, whose memory pervades the island. Many things and places there bear his name; the most prominent are its largest square, a

street, and a hotel, all testifying that here was once his home. He is noted as the first slaveholder in Massachusetts, but he seems to have had a kindly heart, for we read how he sheltered the afflicted La Tour, and when the Baptists were persecuted in Boston, his island gave them sanctuary for worship undisturbed. The Puritans, coming later than Maverick, allowed him to remain on the payment of a fat wether, a fat hog, or forty shillings in money. But he met with many persecutions from the Boston authorities (being an Episcopalian), and finally felt forced to leave his fair island home; a few years later he died at New Amsterdam.

Afterwards the island became a refuge for twenty young ladies, during the siege of Boston. One of these, as King tells us, was especially dear to William Tudor, the Judge-Advocate-General of the American Army, who used to visit her frequently, going from Cambridge to Chelsea: then making his clothing into a bundle, which he placed on his head, he swam to the island, resumed his clothing, and made his coveted call. It is pleasant to know also that all this love-making resulted in a life-long union, untouched by the dissensions amid which it had flourished. So Noddle's Island has its romance and its practical side as well, for some of the finest ships that ever sailed were built there.

Breed's Island, known to the Puritans as Hog Island, was bought in 1800 by John Breed, a wealthy Englishman, who tried to bury here his distracting grief for

the death of his bride. The remains of the house he built — a structure of stone, two hundred feet long and one story high — are still visible on the south slope of the hill. It is interesting to note how the wounded heart, like the wounded bird, seeks a covert in which to hide its agonies from the world. It is as if each sought instinctively the cool sanctuary of silence and loneliness for healing, or for death. So here his name, like his grief, is perpetuated by a goodly heritage, carrying on its bosom the vestiges of a romantic and unforgotten sorrow.

Castle Island was a staunch defender of our Boston town for many years, standing between the city and any menacing foe, and sending signals of assuring co-operation to the guns on Fort Hill, through some of our most troublous times. Loyal men have gone out from its sheltering walls to fight for their country, and brave old soldiers, their last duty done, sleep peacefully beside it. In 1798 Massachusetts ceded the island to the United States. It was in 1799, when President John Adams visited the place, just one hundred and six years ago, that the fort was christened Fort Independence.

It was in 1633 that, for the safety of the Bay Colony, it was thought best to erect a fort on Castle Island. At first it was built with mud walls, which stood some years, and when these failed were replaced with pine trees and earth. These soon decayed, and a

small castle was built, with walls of brick. The present stone structure was substantially built in 1850. "The English sea-captains found it hard to comply with the etiquette of this mud fort, which demanded as respectful notice as if it had been the Tower of London!" In 1686 the harbor was frozen over down to the Castle, about three miles from shore. In 1673 the Castle was destroyed by fire, and the General Court ordered it rebuilt; and the next year the whole Court went down to view it. That was "one of the earliest official junketings in Boston harbor." After the Boston Massacre the citizens demanded that the British soldiers be taken out of town, and they were sent to the Castle. The first salute fired here by a British frigate in honor of the American flag was in 1791, when the *Alligator*, in passing, discharged thirteen guns, which were courteously returned.

This is the most ancient military post in the United States which has been continuously occupied for defensive purposes. "Flag after flag has waved above it,—the cross of St. George, the Pine-tree flag, the white ensign of Massachusetts, and the broad banner of the United States; but they have never been raised or lowered by hostile hand." The historian asks, "What other fortress can show so stainless a record for two hundred and fifty years?" Within thirty-five years a number of graves of soldiers have been made there, bearing only the inscription, "Unknown." There are



A View of the Harbour of Boston taken from Fort Hill.

also two or three forgotten graves of Massachusetts volunteers, on which no Memorial Day flowers are ever laid. One of the quaint old epitaphs, now lost, read: "Here lies the body of John —— aged 50, a faithful soldier and a desperate good Gardener!"

Governor's Island is occupied by the strongest earth-works in Massachusetts. It was granted to Governor Winthrop in 1632, and here he planted the first apple and pear trees in New England. It does not take a very strong imagination to picture him sitting in the doorway of his summer home, looking off on the town he has left, as the twilight begins to gather the haze and shadows around it, and trying to shift the irksomeness of his responsibility and worry of governing a restless and growing colony, to an eager interest in his also growing and experimental orchard. "His eyes were holden that he could not see" the Massachusetts of to-day, and how she would work out her own salvation! Would it have been better for him, and for us, could he have done so? Our faith tells us that He who presides over the councils of the nations "ordereth all things aright."

The island continued in the possession of the Winthrop family until 1808, when it was sold to the Government, which erected thereon a fort, called Fort Warren, in memory of Gen. Joseph Warren. That name was subsequently transferred to the fort on George's Island, and the new structure on Governor's Island was

named Winthrop, in honor of the Governor to whom the island was first granted. This was first known as Conant's Island, probably in honor of Roger Conant, a conspicuous citizen of Hull. The Governor made great efforts to cultivate apples and pears, grapes, plums, and other fruits. "Many a noble orchard of the Bay towns may show lineal descent from this island nursery." He settled it on his son Adam, who was the ancestor of the Cambridge Winthrops, so called because his great-grandson, Prof. John Winthrop, was for more than forty years connected with Harvard College, and it was *his* great-grandson who owned the island when the United States took possession in 1833.

Apple Island always attracts attention, being almost perfect in shape. It is round, and gently rises from its shores to its centre. The approach is very difficult at low tide, owing to its extensive flats. It belonged to Boston in the early days, and was used for pasturing sheep and cattle; but having a richer soil than the other islands, and being less exposed to the winds, it was used before the Revolution as a marine residence. Afterwards it was bought and sold by private individuals, and finally became the property of a Mr. Marsh, who, after the close of the War of 1812, placed his family there, and led a peaceful and happy life, secure from intrusion, and the island seemed to smile under successful cultivation. Mr. Marsh died and was buried on the western slope of its hill. It then passed into

other hands, and after many years of neglect, to prevent the removal of gravel and ballast stones found upon it, the city purchased it in 1867, for thirty-seven hundred and fifty dollars. No finer place could be found for a seaside home.

Long Island is so called because it is the largest island in the harbor, being a mile and three-quarters long and about a quarter of a mile wide. In 1819 a light-house was erected on the East Head. This is built of iron and painted white ; it has a fixed white light, visible for fifteen miles, and is situated within a square enclosure which also contains a stone house for the keeper and a fine well of water. This light is to guide vessels in coming up the harbor. In 1847 a company bought all the island except East Head, built a wharf and a hotel, and laid out streets ; but it proved a failure as a land speculation.

About 1667 "the heroic John Nelson" lived on the island and bought all but four and one-half acres. In a journey to the eastward he was captured by the French, and learned of some secret designs against the New England Colonies. He managed to inform the Massachusetts authorities from his prison at Quebec. For this he was sent to the Bastille in Paris, but was finally released, and after twelve years of absence came back to "his little kingdom of Long Island," where the Nelson family gave a great feast to welcome him and celebrate his return. It is said that fragments of the

table-cloth used on that occasion (1702) are still preserved among his descendants. Nelson, as Shurtleff tells us, was "at the head of the soldiery which, in 1689, compelled Sir Edmund Andros to surrender himself and the fort on Fort Hill to the incensed colonists whose rights he was usurping."

When the British held Boston they had many sheep and cattle pastured on Long Island. In July, 1775, a detachment of five hundred Continental soldiers, in sixty-five whale-boats, landed there and took them all off, capturing at the same time seventeen British sailors. The patriots were cannonaded by the men-of-war and chased to Squantum, but they got safely away. Now the island is fortified, and the city has established a hospital there. The seaward front of East Head has a fine sea-wall, which cost \$150,000.

Deer Island took its name from the fact that deer often swam there from the mainland, and found shelter in its forest when chased by wolves. In 1634 this island was granted to Boston in perpetuity; at that time it was of no special use except to furnish the people of the town with firewood. It is now occupied by the city for some of its institutions, such as houses of industry and reformation, and alms-houses. The large brick building which forms one of the principal landmarks of the harbor was built in 1850. A considerable portion of the easterly shore has been washed away in storms, and a sea-wall has been built for its protection.

The first white resident of Rainsford's Island seems to have been Elder Edward Raynsford. He was the first ruling elder of the Old South Church, and was one of the substantial men of the colony; "nevertheless the colonial authorities disarmed him for heresy in 1637." The good Elder bought his island of the Indians, preferring a just title, and lived there with his wife and children until 1680. Eight years later his wife was buried in King's Chapel Burying-ground. I have not learned his place of interment.

The property passed through many hands until, in 1737, the Selectmen of Boston bought it to erect a hospital for infectious diseases. Until 1852 it was used as a quarantine.

Many years ago, Sweetser says, a remarkable stone tomb was discovered here, containing a skeleton and an iron sword-hilt. In 1858 the State took possession of Rainsford for a home for paupers, and \$100,000 was spent in building and improvements, but in 1866 it was given up and the inmates placed in inland almshouses. In 1872 Boston again purchased it, and established there a City Alms-house, which has sheltered many sad hearts, and among them some of the old veterans of the Civil War. These, however, have found a home on Powder Horn Hill, where they are tenderly cared for, and are not counted as paupers.

Nix's Mate was once an island of respectable size. There is a record that twelve acres of land thereon was

granted to John Gallop. Not over a hundred years ago it was used for pasturing sheep. Nothing in the harbor is the subject of more curiosity than the lonely obelisk that rises out of the sea above the now submerged and vanished island. There is no certain history of the island and its fate, but the legend is that Nix's mate suffered death here for the supposed murder of his master; with his latest breath he protested his innocence, and predicted that in proof of it the whole island would be destroyed. The superstitious, never looking for natural causes for the fulfilment of this prediction, sail by with bated breath.

George's Island, formerly called Pemberton's Island, contains thirty-five acres, and on it stands Fort Warren, the strongest defence of our harbor, built of Quincy and Cape Ann granite. Within its walls Massachusetts recruits for the Civil War were drilled, and many prisoners were held here, notably Mason and Slidell until they were claimed by the British Government. The first fortification on this site was erected in 1778. In 1833 the United States began the construction of a first-class fortress here. In 1861 there were no guns mounted on the fort, but Governor Andrew hurried the 2d battalion of State troops to the island, and applied to Col. Rodman for cannon. Until the Spanish-American War, it was the chief point of defence of our harbor. It is a part of our Nation's history, and we honor its gray walls and what they stand for.

Bug Light is an odd-looking structure, painted red, carrying a red light visible for seven miles. It was erected as a warning to mariners, to guard them from Harding's ledge. It can be approached from the Great Brewster by land at low tide, but at high tide looks like nothing so much as a huge water spider treading daintily the swelling billows.

There are many islands of which the time allotted does not permit me to speak, although there are many things that would interest you which I found while searching for their records.

In 1635 one of the Castle officers was a Thomas Beecher, from whom was descended the famous divine, Henry Ward Beecher.

I found that the first New Englander to hold African slaves lived on one of these islands.

I found that on one of our islands was born a descendant of the famous Lady Godiva, before whose startling philanthropy the suffering peasants reverently closed their doors and windows, as, veiled only by her unbound tresses, she rode among their darkened dwellings, bringing them freedom from cruelty and oppression.

Victims of armed disloyalty lie there, peacefully surrendered to dreamless sleep in unnamed graves. Lovely hillocks in this watery door-yard of our gold-crowned city have sheltered unreconciled sorrow, happy prosperity, shining loyalty, suffering from every form of

poverty, vice and adversity, those physically, mentally and morally sick, whether in the quaint houses of the early settlers, the humble homes of fishermen, or the luxurious summer retreats of the wealthy.

I have found an ancient description of the harbor, which I will quote, because it still remains good after the lapse of nearly two and one-half centuries : —

“This harbor is made by a great company of islands whose high cliffs shoulder out the boisterous seas, yet may easily deceive an unskillful pilot, presenting many fair openings and broad sounds which afford too shallow water for any ships, though navigable for boats and small pinnaces. It is a safe and pleasant harbor within, having but one common and safe entrance, and that not very broad ; there is scarce room for three ships to come in ‘board-and-board’ at a time, but being once in, there is room for the anchorage of five hundred ships.”

A few years after Gosnold’s visit, many settlements were made around Massachusetts Bay, and notably among them the one at Plymouth and that at Salem. Doubtless there were many lonely days among the Plymouth people in their almost desperate struggles to maintain themselves against sickness, starvation, and the Indians ; naturally they longed for friendly companionship and a little of the gossip of the old country. So, when there was an opportunity, they decided to pay a visit to their neighbors at Salem. They got up an excursion (this is the first “harbor excursion” of which

I can find any record), and on their way across they camped for the night on one of the islands. One of their chief men, Isaac Allerton — chairman, it may be, of the excursion committee — gave his name to the bluff which we all know so well as Point Allerton, and called the nearest islands, in honor of his wife, "The Brewsters." She was the daughter of the pious and renowned Pilgrim, Elder Brewster. We cannot help wishing that the historian had not ceased so abruptly, but had told us if their distant neighbors were glad to see them, and if their enjoyment was sufficient to compensate them for their trouble !

Who of us will ever go down the harbor hereafter without picturing to ourselves the staid and proper Pilgrims mooring their clumsy craft at one of these islands before the darkness fell? How we wish that the chairman of that excursion committee could have forecasted, as they held their evening devotions, that more than two and one-half centuries afterward, those islands should still bear the name of the woman he loved, and that the least among them should perpetuate the brightness of her virtues by holding up, both as a warning and a guide, its brilliant lamp, while the traffic and peoples of every land rush by, sure of their way so long as that shines ; some seeking a quiet anchorage and rest from their voyage, some speeding out over the gray and uncertain ocean. Surely old Bostonians must reverence her name, as her memory gleams along the

centuries, and the thought of her will make our hearts happier if we send out of our lives help in deeds or words that shall cheer those who might be lost in the darkness of the tempests of temptation and adversity. She must have been *very* good, when God has so distinguished her.

I should keep you here till morning should I tell you of all that these islands and the grand and beautiful harbor whisper to me. They tell of the mighty work wrought by the waves in storms and tides, while slowly acre after acre yields to their destructive power, until the sea claps its white hands in triumph where two big islands once stretched in seeming security; they tell how war, and treachery, and treason, and bitter sorrow have sought a home here in these restless waters; they tell how loyalty has thundered out its protest against those who dare to lay a threatening hand on the halcyons of our dear old flag; how wicked ambition sought here an abiding place in vain; and they also tell how love and romance and the sweetest of all earthly living have here met the God who knows we have need of these things, and so life has become beautiful and heaven seemingly very near.

The wailing old Hebrew prophet cried, "There is sorrow on the sea;" it *cannot* be quiet, but the ships of all lands know, when they can see, no matter how dark the night, the steady light from Mary Brewster's island, that they can "run in" and be safe.

We go down the harbor when the sun is fierce on
our city homes, and breathe in the fresh coolness of its
breezes ; we rejoice in the beauties of its many islands,
and restfully dream of the romances, ancient and mod-
ern, that encircle every one.

And forget, for the hour and the day,
The weary life-headlands, so steep,
That our tired feet are now climbing,
And the streams so bitter and deep.

Our Bay stretches wide its blue waters,
And Boston sits by like a queen,
While the smile of the Great Spirit lingers,
Its islands and headlands between.



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